

**HER STORY !**  
**An Anthology of Studies in Women's Problems**

**EDITOR**  
**KARABI SEN**

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***Dedicated  
to the  
cause of women***



## FOREWORD

Dr. Sen's essay is perceptive, lucid and moving. She makes the point which I have been emphasizing that the women's movement is part of the larger movement for full equality for every individual, regardless of race, religion or sex.

The human race cannot deal with the grave problems of today, much less evolve to a higher plane, unless the concept of equality is not only acknowledged but brought into effect, equality for all under-privileged groups and communities. All over the world, including the so-called advanced countries, even women of the privileged groups have been denied full and active participation in different spheres of activity and in some ways have been relegated to the position of second-class citizens.

Women share the burdens and problems of men, suffering economically or politically as well as from whatever racial or other communal discrimination there may be, but over and above they have the disadvantage of being women. For even at the tail end of the 20th Century, society remains male-dominated. There is now a glimmer of light. An increasing number of people, including men, are realizing what Mahatma Gandhi stressed that no movement, no programme, can succeed if half the population is kept out.

As a child who knew her mind and had parents who were understanding and broad-minded, I cannot remember ever wondering about being a girl or boy. Nor did being female ever come in my way, then or later. The atmosphere of our house and the circumstances of our lives gave importance to what one was and did, rather than who one was. Not that I was always satisfied with all aspects of life but I don't think I can blame any difficulty on my being a woman. Perhaps that is why I was somewhat slow in appreciating the constrictions on, and mental strain of, other women. My mother was a feminist who, much as she loved my father, felt that she could have made a far greater contribution to the freedom struggle had she been a man.

In Chitrangada, Rabindranath Tagore makes Chitra, a Manipur princess in the ancient days of the Mahābhārata, say to Arjuna "I am Chitra. No goddess to be worshipped, nor yet the object of common pity to be brushed aside like a moth with indifference. If you deign to keep me by your side in the path of danger and daring, if you allow me to share the great duties of life, then you will know my true self". This must be one of the first known instances of a woman consciously asserting her individuality. Chitra and other women in India and elsewhere who have thus spoken out from ancient times have mostly wanted to be helpmates to their menfolk. However, woman is not merely a supportive character but a human being in her own right, an essential half, neither better nor worse. In India, through the ages, women have revolted against the injustice of being relegated to an inferior status.

Even apart from the rare cases of sex changes, we know that each human has what have (rightly or wrongly) been described as female or male qualities in different degrees. A lot of nonsense is written about who is stronger or more capable. How can one tell unless each one, regardless of race, community or sex, has the full opportunity of developing their personality and of getting experience, without the hurdles of prejudices in language, social customs, regulations and laws ?

I have always appreciated the crucial role of women in social regeneration without being alienated from their roots. But it is only in the last years that I have fully realized how strong is the current they have to struggle against.

Dr. Sen writes of the persisting opposition to women, the apathy and ignorance of women themselves, and at the same time of the new hope and opportunity. Ideas of strength and capability are changing.

A section of the Women's Movement in the West proceeded on the understanding that emancipation lay in copying men. Wasn't that conceding to men their traditional superior status? I am glad there is now a more balanced view. Freedom of spirit and action can come only by recognizing and being oneself, not by imitation of another and even less by bowing to the accepted but outdated ideas of superiority and inferiority, either of the sexes or of aptitudes and attitudes. Let the individual woman find what is relevant to her own personality and life. Women are discriminated against and this discrimination must be fought and ended. But not, in my view, by diminishing oneself, or going contrary to one's instincts.

This century has seen movements for the liberation of long suffering under-privileged and suppressed sectors of the human population—colonial peoples, religious minorities, coloured groups, castes and classes and, of course women. In many countries, women who had for long been kept out of politics acquired franchise, and certain social and economic rights, at least in law. It is good that traditional stereotypes are being questioned and women themselves are showing increasing assertiveness. For laws to be effective, people's minds and social attitudes have to be changed. This seems to be an exceedingly slow process and can be hastened only by fuller understanding and consistent effort.

I have glanced through some of the articles in this book. I cannot say that I agree with every assumption and assessment. But by bringing together the ideas of scholars from different

social, economic and national backgrounds on the problems of women, Dr. Karabi Sen opens out an opportunity for a more purposeful discussion on a subject which is of vital concern.

Indira Gandhi  
(INDIRA GANDHI)

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## **EDITOR'S NOTE : EAST WEST PERSPECTIVE ON WOMEN'S PROBLEMS**

The colonization of India by European communities had made India familiar with Europe since several generations. There were colonies for white people in big cities, there were shops which sold British goods, French wine, Dutch cheese, Danish condensed milk ; people were familiar with European food, European dress, European habits, and the educated people were conversant with European languages and through that with European literature, philosophy, science, music and other fine arts. There was a sizeable Anglo-Indian community which appeared like a miniature European community and its members were closely associated to us as school teachers and music teachers. We grew up in a society which was totally exposed to European influence from which we drew abundantly but which we also resisted. Our military and economic strength were negligible. The source of our power lay mainly in our intellectual or cultural heritage which was pooled together to form the image of a national ideal. Such awakening on the national scale was made possible, only because the common British education and the common British

rule for the country brought the people together. Much that was despicable in our society was being changed and the gradual improvement in social conditions that has been steadily going on since independence was actually initiated by Europeans.

Modern Indian society is a blend of the east and the west. Our administrative set up, our legal system and our academic cultural life is largely outlined by our European contact. "The east is east and the west is west, the twaine shall never meet" does not apply to our case. Social issues concerning women in particular, underwent widespread changes under European influence. Notable amongst these were the act prohibiting the burning alive of widows on their husband's funeral pyres, the widow re-marriage act and the act which prohibited child marriage. The divorce act, the Hindu succession act entitling the daughter to an equal share in the parental property along with brothers, the abortion act, the act ensuring equal pay to women as with men, prohibition of bigamy among Hindus, the anti-dowry act were other advantages quickly enacted following political independence. These enactings also have behind them the influence of the British educational system and reflect our growing contact with the western world. Yet, with the exception of the acts prohibiting polygamy and the "*Sati*" or widow-burning, all the other acts have remained only as possible channels of escape which may be resorted to as a last step. The cases of divorce, widow-re-marriage or abortion are exceedingly few. Child marriage continues to be rampant amongst village folk, most marriages revolve around the dowry, most fathers prefer to pass on the property to the son. This discrepancy between law and practice, between the rights guaranteed and the meagre utilization of them, shows an interesting pattern. Whatever was to be stopped could be stopped promptly with the exercise of governmental power, displayed through the employment of police and judicial force. But to lead people on to a new type

of behaviour is a different thing. For this the creation of a new mentality is necessary.

The mentality to make ample use of the privileges granted is absent in India. This may be partly because a great majority still is not systematically trained through the modern educational system. Amongst the educated, child-marriage is absent and women have begun to inherit parental property. But even in this section widow-re-marriage, divorce or abortion are rare, in fact rarer than amongst the uneducated lower caste people, among whom these three practices were always present. The educated class retains its ties with the uneducated. The higher caste communities show reluctance to initiate in their lives changes through utilization of the liberties granted by the new legislations. Loyalty to tradition is not the only factor behind the situation. It further means that the average educated Indian mind is critical. Whilst accepting the necessity of having legislation to keep the scope of utilization open, should the situation demand it, it prefers to assess the situation seriously through evaluation of the modern and as well as the old values over a sufficiently long stretch of reflection and eventually finds the other values more satisfying in most of the cases. This is not a blind following of tradition, which is truly the case with the uneducated ; it means a voluntary rejection of a step after due ratiocination. The Indian mind at all levels (barring a few aboriginal tribes living in complete isolation), shows in different degrees, a blending of eastern and western thinking habits. Perhaps this could be and is true for any society with a strong traditional background that has lived in close contact with a foreign culture over a long period of time.

Did the western world absorb any of our values ? The answer is in the negative. This contact did not take the form of a reciprocal relation. The Europeans came to India as traders but soon established themselves as rulers

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and therefore, the primary relation established between them and the Indians was one of ruler and ruled. This relation is by implication one of superiority and inferiority and does not facilitate exchange on equal terms. Further, the condition of India when the British took possession of our country, was comparable to the dark ages. The later days of the Muslim rule were disorganised and the people had forgotten their own heritage, living only on fossils of the past. The work of unearthing the past glory was largely accomplished by European scholars. The profit however, was reaped by the Indians for the researches ushered in our Renaissance. The impact of the work of these scholars on their native countries has been negligible. India had no political independence, and even after the gaining of independence her appalling economic poverty is the picture that most readily comes to the mind of the rest of the world. The doubt that anything valuable can be learnt from a country which finds it difficult to satisfy the basic physical needs of its people is also behind the lack of reciprocity. The colour prejudice had and continues to have an important influence on human psychology. Not only do the white people feel less inclined to establish intimacy with the coloured but the coloured people themselves feel an awe for the white which is closely linked with the instinctive love and admiration felt for light and repulsion from darkness. Fairness of skin is a decisive advantage for even an Indian girl in the marriage market. The colour bar, undoubtedly formed barrier in the way of active interchange of culture in the years prior to independence and it is possible that the difficulty continues even today in a suppressed form.

The fact therefore is that although India has come into close contact with the western world for the last three centuries, there has been no large-scale exchange of culture between her and the white people who came to live on her land which can be meaningfully described as fruitful for her visitors in any sense.

other than economical. The question may thus naturally arise if such a relation is at all possible between India and the USA which, although theoretically a country of immigrants from places all over the world, is inhabited predominantly by white settlers. The inability to experiment with new ideas from foreign lands would presuppose a special incapacity of the mind. Such a special deficiency is understandable in the case of some aboriginals or tribals who have long lived in isolation amidst remote hills and forests, but it is difficult to believe this to be the case with people who are reputedly adventurous, outgoing, sea-faring. Admittedly, there exist vast differences in culture between the two frontiers. In fact the necessity of learning arises only because there is difference. There are many similarities also between the two worlds. Patterns of our social life, philosophical ideas, literary themes, festivities, morals display considerable likeness with pre-war Europe and America. If the modern white man can understand the mind of his forefathers, he can pretty well understand us also. If he is not totally happy with the present situation, he ought to be looking out for newer ideas prevalent in societies where people are happier in areas where they are unable to create happiness. Interchange of cultural ideas and philosophical perspectives is possible and also necessary for revitalising our existence. Members of the same species show common physical and psychical characteristics which are the basis of species differentiation. It cannot be denied, that the human mind also shows certain basic intellectual and emotional structures, on the basis of which people living in opposite extremes of the globe can come to live together in social co-operation and profit by the friendliness and the eagerness to learn from each other. The less rigid our mental makeup, the greater the likelihood of progress and happiness.

Coming to philosophical perspectives on social issues concerning women, we may expect to find here illustrated the same trend of some basic similarities along with the presence of

some differences. The differences are of particular interest to us because each side should ideally be in search of new ideas for the purpose of experimentation on social issues. Nevertheless, the similarities form the basis of any such project aimed at the assimilation of new ideas and are therefore of as much interest to us.

To come to an understanding of what the philosophical perspective of social issues could be, it is easiest to begin by differentiating between social practices and social issues. Social practices refer to collective behaviour that is performed partly spontaneously and partly as a matter of routine, without our giving much thought to the matter. Social practices evolve unnoticed and have a long history of gradual growth through the cumulative strength of partially repetitive behaviour. They may have their source primarily in human needs and desires. Some of them may be found to exist universally amongst different types of societies. Some social practices may however be traced to have a historical beginning. We perform them with minimum reflection and almost mechanically. A social practice becomes a social issue when people start reflecting about it. Usually a social practice takes this turn when it appears to have become so outdated as not to fit in with other changes taking place in society. In the background of the changed conditions, that practice is unable to fulfil the needs to satisfy which it evolved, or for which it was evolved. As a result of this, disharmonies arise in social relations to dissolve which people are stimulated to think out the purpose, method and the whole course of development of the behaviour concerned and give adequate thought to the causes threatening its survival. The changing situation is studied and assessed, the social practice and its goal are judged and evaluated and the justifiability or the unjustifiability of such conduct or the ideal it intends to serve become our central concern. A social issue indicates a turning point in the history of society and is symptomatic of a transition period in society. It is inevitably preceded by the



conscious experience of pain, suffering and misery and the outburst of problems which are too startling for the average man to let go unattended. A social issue is expressive of conditions which seem to be eating away the roots of healthy social life and diminishing the possibility of individual and social happiness. As such, it mobilizes a variety of important resources to cope with the situation. We may find the turmoil reflected in our literature, in our political, administrative and legal set ups, in our moral and evaluative thinking. A philosophical perspective on a social issue, is representative mostly of the ethical aspect of the issue. It has also to clarify and redefine the terms and ideas involved in the implicit and explicit formulation of the issue. A social issue indicates the need for changes in the social structure, and the development of a philosophical perspective, on the issue, helps to find the directions in which changes are going to be implemented. It disentangles the ideal from the practice and subjects both to an evaluating process. Through its critical appraisal of the whole situation, it prepares the ground for the fresh directions to be given to our behaviour. Many religious, legal, political and medical issues have to be referred for a philosophical analysis of the problems for changes to be implemented in settling their disputes and doubts.

For developing a philosophical perspective on any social issue, the analyses of certain key concepts and relations are of central importance. This is true for social issues concerning women as well with the addition, perhaps, of a few more terms and relations relevant to the special field involved. Primary amongst the concepts and relations needing clarifications and possible redefinition are "actual and ideal" and "individual and society." To this may be added the set, "man, woman and child" in the context of social issues concerning women specially.

It is well known that one of the primary differences between sciences like anthropology psychology and philosophy, is that while the former studies the actual course of affairs, philosophy

is throughout an evaluative process. It is a natural tendency of a human being to regulate his behaviour in accordance with a norm or ideal. It is symbolic of his persistent desire to improve upon the existent or actual set of conditions. Philosophical contentment and resignation can be achieved only with the help of rigorous training of thought, feeling and impulses. Once sought for and achieved such states of mind also become ideals and indicate that the natural state of mind for a human being is to be dissatisfied with actuality. It is symptomatic of freedom and is a factor behind exploratory movements. The construction of the ideal is act of intellectual adventure. The constant comparison of how things are and how things should be, has always been a determining force in conditioning the course of society. A philosophical perspective on social issues concerns itself with the moral aspects of these issues. It raises questions of rightness or wrongness of social concepts and conduct, attempts to assess the degree to which an ideal has been actualized in behaviour, to determine if the methods adopted are suited to the attainment of the end and may even raise more fundamental questions of the nature if the end justifies the means. A philosophical perspective on social issues is also expected periodically to examine our ends and values. Such a transvaluation of values is necessary to determine if any of our norms need to be discarded or substituted by some other norm better suited to changed social conditions. In the process of such a transvaluation of values a philosopher may also find it necessary to recognize that while some values are transient and local, some others are basic and universal in the sense of being so deeply rooted in our existence, that to uproot them or to effect a major change in their content may prove extremely difficult, or else be productive of massive unhappiness. A philosophical understanding of the nature of change thus constitutes an important aspect of a philosophical perspective on social issues. This involves not only the recognition that change has set in and calls for remodelling of structure, but

implies the further understanding that while certain situations demand and can be cured of their sickness by drastic measures effecting sudden change in the social pattern, there may be other areas of a quite different nature where change is apt to be much slower, sometimes slow enough to be unnoticeable, as unnoticeable and perhaps as intricate and inevitable as the process of biological evolution of life and consciousness. A proper understanding of the evolutionary process as a combination of imperceptible selective change, at once gradual and sudden can go a long way to help us appreciate and give proper direction and the right amount of impetus to social change.

The type of relation existing between the 'norm' and actuality, between guidelines and practice may also form the subject of philosophical discussion in these areas. Divergent lines of thought are noticeable concerning this issue. Some thinkers place a greater emphasis on the actual course of affairs and believe that actual human practice deserves our careful attention as it reveals to us human limitations and throws light on the natural inclinations of human beings. Attempts to suppress or regulate the urges natural to us with reference to an ideal which is in many cases contrary to our actual desires and tendencies may create widespread dissatisfaction, neuroticism, cruelty and unnecessary sense of guilt. Wherever widespread variance between the ideal and actual practice is noticeable, it might be suspected that the ideal sets a standard which exceeds human capacities of attaining to it. A greater measure of happiness may be achieved by preventing the denial of human urges, than by persuading or forcing men and women to subscribe to ideal urging strict control of desires.

In this connection it may be noted that the objection put forward is not so much against the ideal as such, as against an ideal with a negative import for conduct. In principle it might be impossible to isolate the ideal or the actual completely.

However much negative the ideal may be, it still is made up of patches of our actual tendencies, although perhaps in a mutilated form. Human response is not always one of positive enjoyment of a basic propensity but it may also take the form of withdrawal or negative attitude and one may even find contentment in such withdrawal depending on the circumstances. Fasting may, on occasions, be more satisfying than eating. Thus a negative ideal does not, by virtue of its negativity, lose its touch with real life. On the other hand it is equally impossible to confine our approach to the level of what 'is' and stop all dealings in terms of the "ought". Philosophers may seek to identify themselves with anthropological and sociological approaches which make comparative studies of social customs and habits, making us aware of diverse social ideals and practices. This diversity of norms appears to go against the belief in absolute values and shows each value as relative to and operative within its own system of reference. Historical perspectives further show the values as transient in nature and inclines us to doubt that values are in any sense abiding. But once again we are dealing with particular values and not with the act of evaluating as such. When we denounce any particular ideal, or show preference for the actual practices and the inclinations behind these practices and disapprove of the tendency to impose the ideal over the actual, or deny the absolute character of value judgments we are, in fact, each time ourselves making a value judgment. To deny that value-judgments are absolute is to characterize the theories subscribing to such a view as wrong and to assert the theory of relativity of value-judgments as right. To show preferences and to long for what is not are natural characteristics for beings with memory and imagination and the actual world of such creatures is bound to be a blend of enjoyment of what is readily available and a search for that which is missing. Their behaviour is purposive and their actual practices are always explicitly or implicitly regulated by 'end' or goals.

Comparison, criticism, evaluation, are thus deep rooted in our consciousness and our practice reflects it. It is hard to stop analyses or social situations from turning into debates concerning the justifiability of the ends which they uphold. To create values and to transvaluate values, are some of the basic functions of our human existence given the particular type of physio-psychological apparatus that we possess at present and given the fact that we are born into an environment that we largely have to accept and cannot create at will and which also appears to be far too big for us to know exhaustively. The vague sense of insecurity associated with our existence gives birth to a set of values which focus on the human desire for freedom from insecurity. There is no escape from the value-situation, because there is no escape from our human existential situation and the philosopher's task is precisely to face and develop the value-aspect of social situations. A social situation developing into a social issue implies that the value-structure in that area needs to be set in order and then the philosopher's role becomes important. A philosophical perspective concerns itself with the ethical, critical and evaluative aspects of social issues. Often it has to be a critic of a previous philosophical perspective, for, as said before, all social practices reflect some value, some philosophical perspective.

Indian society has always encouraged people to abide more by ideals than let their life be influenced by felt desires and inclinations. The hold of ideals on the actual life of people has been so long and mostly unquestioned, that it is difficult to know the ideal from the actual now. The philosophical perspective embodied in the ideals was basically one of spiritualism and expressed itself in ideas of dharma karma, rebirth, reunion, liberation, dukhak, ananda, and self-denial. The doctrine of maya (illusion) and avidya (ignorance) pivotal to highly intellectual and competent philosophical systems pervaded the Indian mind throughout the centuries

and still form the core of our culture. We are habituated to think of this life as one of a long series, as an inheritance from our deeds in previous lives, as another opportunity offered to us to break the chain of births and rebirth through conscious effort, true knowledge and doing of good deeds. This life is looked upon as a passing phase, partly to be accepted with resignation and very much to be made use for cancelling the effects of sins accumulated through a righteous living. Under the influence of this trend of thought the individual and his life in this world appeared as an illusion, as a temporary form in a temporary state, alienated from its source, suffering from illusion due to his ignorance regarding his true nature, confined to the body and enslaved to bodily conditions, standing in need of liberation. Liberation alone could bring happiness and this could be achieved by three main techniques ; knowledge, love and conscious practice. A mastery of either of these of three ways could succeed in reuniting, man with his true spiritual ancestry. To achieve such a state of blissful reunion and emancipation from misery due to karma or past deeds and maya or illusion and false principles of knowledge and belief it was necessary to regulate one's life through the discipline of dharma or duty. If the individual was not prepared to turn to an ascetic and discard this is worldly life in search of a better life, then he was free to live out the life of a normal person and yet attain liberation if he practiced his fourfold dharma or duties properly. In his childhood his duty is to learn and acquire knowledge in his youth his duty is to marry procreate children and carry out the other duties of a householder ; upon approaching old age, he should retire from the functions of a householder, and live like hermits in forests ; finally, in ripe old age, he should live a life of complete renunciation. These duties applied to men and women alike and they were free to turn to ascetics or practice the paths of complete dedication to knowledge, devotion or work. There are several examples in

literature and classics of spirited women choosing their own paths to liberation. Being a woman in no way prevented the attainment of liberation through the exercise of the known techniques. "What shall I do with a legacy which does not make me immortal? I am not satisfied with insignificant riches, only the limitless spiritual can make me happy." This was the utterance of a sage's wife to her husband who wanted to give her a share in his property before he left for the life of a hermit. She wanted a share, not of his money, but of his intellectual riches.

There was also a strong tendency towards monism side by side with spiritualism and asceticism. Creation was the diversified expression of what was ultimately one and joy in creating was the reason behind this split up. The division into man and woman was thus traceable into an original unity and each half was a completion for the other. Theoretically the division into sexes represented no hierarchy. Each half longed to regain the original unity which explained the love and attraction felt by each sex for the opposite sex and also stressed the need for their union for further creation. The split up of the original unity into man and woman and their subsequent longing for each other was celebrated in classics which dealt elaborately and passionately on themes of divine separation. The unconquerable grief and yearning of Rama, the divine he, for Sita, the divine she, when she was intrigued to leave her abode dramatically represent the sense of incompleteness that overpowers a man who has lost a woman with whom he felt one in being. Similarly, the passionate longing and all-engulfing misery felt by Radha when she was separated from Krishna, the divine Lord, shows how severe the pangs of separation are for a woman in love with a man. Love was a bond of union between two halves which were originally one and which unceasingly sought the lost unity. Love held the two halves together and restored the lost unity; a separation could only be an experience of intense

pain, coupled with a desire for a fresh union. The need of a man for a woman was as vital as that of a woman for a man, spiritually, sexually and in every other sense. There was nothing shameful for either sex in this mutual longing and dependence. For each sex the union with the other sex, would mean an enrichment of experience, an entry into an unknown territory, knowledge of which is not to be had without intimacy. The only substitute for what one could know by love was to reborn as the other. This is how Radha addressed Krishna. "My love, please be reborn as a woman in your next life. Only then would you understand how a woman craves for a man and how great is the misery that fills my heart when you are absent." Upon Krishna's return to Radha, she says, "My love, tell me that you kept well when you were away. Let me feel well by hearing your good tidings."

This brings us to a yet another form of self-devial, which is perhaps better described as selflessness. Asceticism represented what was largely a denial of the bodily self. "The heart must become a burial ground ; pride, selfishness and desire all broken into dust, then and only then will Shyama (the goddess) dance there." This also represents another plane of self-denial, a denial of the mixed self the bodily and the impulsive self, the narrow and the ambitious self. But in love we come to a completely different form of self-denial finding expression in the seeking of the other. Extinction of the self is more visibly positive in this case and leads to great happiness with the ushering in of the other into one's own selfwhere space has been made available for the other, much as we remove some furniture to create extra space for the guest who is welcome. Indian imagery often alludes to the self as a room with doors and windows, with plenty of space available, well-cleaned and kept ready and comfortable for the beloved guest, the other, who brings completion to the self which awaits the guest. The self is also compared to the temple,



which is complete only when the deity is seated in it.

The philosophy of self-denial permeates Indian social life through and through. At every step of life, at all major turns of life, in all major relationships of life, the individual is constantly reminded to control his self, to forget his self, to be master of his self, to decorate his self for the pleasure and happiness of the other, just as we keep our bodies clean not only for our sake but also for the sake of those who live with us and around us. The social atmosphere conditions him to always try to overcome his individual being for the sake of the other, to overpower those demands of the self the satisfaction of which has to be purchased at the cost of denial of satisfaction to some other self. The urge to sacrifice one's own self for the furtherance of another self is one of the major values of Indian life. This I consider to be the most important trend of our social life and also the main point of difference between the east and the west. While the west lays great emphasis on the individual and considers the assertion of individuality as a rightful conduct and goal of social as well as individual endeavours the perspective is just the reverse in the case of India. The individual is the point of departure and not of arrival. The individual can be granted only that much freedom, only that degree of sanction to satisfy his personal interests, as can be enjoyed without creating unhappiness for another person. The best way to achieve this delicate balance is to go on increasing the sphere of the individual self. The more of his own self that the individual can merge with other selves, the greater are the likelihoods of his caring for the interests of the others and thereby creating happiness in others. This is considered also the surest way of producing a lasting happiness for his self. This is by no means an unnatural process for the self, outlined and defined by our individual bodies, is hardly ever contained within this fixed limit. The needs of the body relate it to the sources of satisfaction and the self which feels these needs and satisfactions begins

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to identify itself with these sources of satisfaction. Besides these, the self has needs of its own with their own sources of satisfaction and the self establishes bonds of identity and union with these points. The expansion of the self is thus an automatic process which can however be geared up or slowed, and be given specific orientation by the social ethos.

When the Indian norms urge the individual to forego his own claims for the sake of collective interests it is some other individual's interests that are intended to be protected. Social interests, group interests, turn out on analysis to be interests of individuals and not just impersonal ends or norms. The individual is valued not because of his uniqueness but because of his capacity to forego his uniqueness for the sake of what is other than himself. This is not to deny that every individual has certain basic human rights but is an indirect way of ensuring such rights, to all individuals by making each individual aware of restrictions that need to be imposed on his liberty to make the dream come true for the rest. It is a technology of duty aimed at the production of greater and greater rights.

In matters of practical implementation, however, the different ideologies have assumed courses that have left wide gaps between the ideal and the realization of the ideal. Ideals as well as efforts at realization of ideals have undergone changes, but the overall noticeable effect has been the widening gulf and growing discrepancy between ideals and practices. If the changing pattern of practices works in the direction of producing a greater happiness in people then such a rift between norm and practice may indicate the need of revising our norms or methodology for achievement of norm. But if actual practices stifle joyous living, particularly for the weaker sections of society then such practices indicate a deteriorating trend for society and might stress the need of revitalization of existent ideals, adoption of new technology etc. So far as women are concerned, barring the developments.

of the last hundred years or so, social history has been a record of steady deterioration. Rigid role differentiation between the sexes together with the attribution of a second class status to women's allotted role developed quite early in history. Concepts of female inferiority and assignment of duties of unequal strength to women were present as early as the beginning of the Buddhist period. While the patriarchal family structure upheld feminine virtue as a great value, the need for increasing the population strength encouraged polygamy, and polyandry began to become rare and exceptional. The importance of feminine virtue also discouraged pronounced sexual interests and inclinations in women in modest while at the same time the presence of a strong admiration for spiritualism and asceticism amongst men who began form a scholarly community to the growing exclusion of women, prompted men to look upon women as seducers and symbols of sin through sex. Even where the necessity of sex was recognized as in reproduction, such recognition actually worked against the interest of women for it converted their image into that of a machine, a means for an end. They were no longer valuable as companions, their prima facie importance lying in their ability to bring forth children. The muslim invasion brought with it the seclusion of women as a result of which women were totally confined to domestic life, so much so that women of aristocratic families never saw what the sun was like in their lives. Lack of education and seclusion combined to enhance the misery of women who were exploited and ill-treated in multiple ways in all situations in which women were involved except where blood-relation existed. It is a fact that although as a rule male children were preferred to female children, particularly with the first borns, a female child suffered from no emotional deprivation in her natal home and her life as a daughter or as a sister to a brother was happy and she continued to be a welcome guest and an object of affection even after her marriage, the brother taking up the role of the father after the latter died. Even after marriage the redeeming

event in her life was the birth of a son, leading to the establishment of a blood tie. It gave the married woman her only security in her new life-for the son could never abandon or displease the mother who depended on him as her only source of real affection and for whose sake she was prepared to undergo any sacrifice gladly. So far as her relations with her husband and the rest of the husband's family was concerned, she enjoyed little rights or respect could be said to be sanctioned or guaranteed by law and custom. If the husband was kind and loving she had a smooth life, but securing the husband's love was a matter of immense luck. Not being based on a natural tie such love could not be guaranteed, and remained under continuous threat of being discontinued. The bride was the object of constant criticism from all quarters of the husband's household and was usually deprived of all share in husband's property if she became a widow with minor sons. Even with sons they could claim only maintenance.

The contact with the British civilization ushered in what may be described as the golden age for women. Certain brutalities on women were immediately put to an end. Legal changes were introduced and educational institutions were opened for men and women alike. The new education led to great upheavals amongst educated man in favour of humanism which worked as a single force to generate the struggle for national freedom and freedom of women and also helped to weaken the hold of the caste system upon society. The revival of old Sanskrit texts in philosophy and literature was taken up in earnest and this helped the people to combine whatever was valuable in their own heritage with the new ideas from the west. Amongst educated families women gradually ceased to be looked upon as mere commodities to be maintained for the reproduction of children and performance of menial duties. They took active part in the freedom movement and their newly gained status remained secure.

The improvement, however, occurred only amongst the edu-

cated families. The situation changed little for the vast majority of illiterate families to whom past as well as present values remained inaccessible. They lived on whatever was available to them through blind and mechanical transmission of culture. But things are changing for people living in remote villages also. Most villages now have access to mass media like radio or newspaper which familiarize them with changes in social structure introduced through law and help in making people aware of their own rights even without systematic education. But without the spread of education it is difficult to explain the philosophical perspective behind social changes and issues, nor is it possible to develop newer such perspectives.

The difficulty may be examined with the illustration of the several changes introduced in the institution of marriage. Marriage in an institution so old that it is difficult to say exactly when and how it began. Even very primitive tribes had this practice and it has evolved several forms in its historical course. Monogamy, polygamy, polyandry, sororate, levirate, exogamy, endogamy, widow-remarriage, divorce and remarriage by divorced couples represent the different ways in which people have tried to structure and restructure living together of man and woman under legal sanction. These divergent forms of marriage also show how men and women regarded each other and what they thought of their intimate life and its fruits, the child and the family.

The traditional Hindu marriage rites begin with paying of homage to the gods and to the supreme spirit behind creation. The blessings of the assembled parties who come as witnesses to the function are then sought. Marriage, which is defined as a sacrament or a holy duty of each individual to society if he chooses to adopt a worldly life, takes place through the performance of several rites and prayers and oaths uttered by the bride and the bridegroom. The bride addresses the bridegroom in the following manner :

I respect you with all my mind and all my heart.  
 I respect your soul with my soul.  
 May there be no barrier between us.  
 Let us remember today the divinely creative.  
 May my mind move with your mind in love.  
 Let us move like flowing water on the path of life.  
 My life is linked with your life, my mind with your mind,  
 My vows with your vows,  
 Let us work together in friendship in the pursuit of the same goal.

To all I offer my regards. Gracious and spontaneous shall  
 be the path of my husband, and I will walk on it with pleasure ;  
 May my husband live long, may he live a hundred years. May  
 my kinsfolk prosper. May I deserve your friendship, husband.  
 May my friendship make me one with you. May your  
 friendship make you one with me. Oh morning star ! as you  
 are forever constant, may I be constant in my husband's  
 home.

The bridegroom addresses the bride in the following manner :

I respect you in the same manner as you respect me in the presence  
 of all.  
 Love is giving to love. Love is the giver. Love is the receiver.  
 Love is the inexhaustible ocean.  
 You come to me with love. Oh Love, this is all your doing.  
 Come, my bride, let us take our first step for nourishment.  
 Let us take the second step for success.  
 Let us take the third step for loyalty.  
 Let us take the fourth step for happiness.  
 Let us take the fifth step for the good of all creatures.  
 Let us take the sixth step for prosperity.  
 Let us take the seventh step for an illuminated life.  
 Happily I hold your hand in marriage.  
 I am your husband.  
 Let us grow old together, happily.  
 As beloved, as friend, as guide, be with me.  
 With divine grace assisting, let us together build an ideal home.  
 Let us your heart be with my mission.  
 Your mind and my mind may they be one.  
 May our words delight each other.

May Divinity unite the two of us.  
Let our hearts be united.  
Let us share our sustenance.  
Let us be bound together in truth.  
In mutual love, in mutual good, in mutual joy,  
May we see a hundred autumns,  
May we live a hundred autumns,  
May we hear a hundred autumns.

At the end of the ceremony the priest blesses the bride in the following manner :

May you be honoured like a queen  
By all in your husband's home.  
Respected guests, witness this auspicious bride and bless her.  
May she and her husband be happy in their love.  
May she have long-lived children.

Then he gives the following advice to the couple :

May the fruits of this sacred wedding ceremony  
be blessed with the grace of god.  
It is only through the fullness of ourselves,  
That we can seek fulfilment.  
Let this eternal wisdom be yours today.  
Let peace and peace and peace be everywhere.

Through the series of oath-takings one can sense the commitments of marriage, the basic feelings and desires which men and women seek to fulfil through marriage. One can also sense the lurking fear of a possible unhappiness and end of the marital tie which is sought to be prevented by blessings of gods and assembled guests who further act as witnesses to the oaths taken and solemnize the whole ceremony. There is the desire for love and companionship for a friendly guide and cheerful partner, for children and a peaceful home providing for our daily physical comforts and satisfying our spiritual needs. There is also a desire for the marital relation to be steadfast and life-long. In spite of the prevalent spirit

of mutual respect and equality of status of bride and bridegroom the patriarchal structure of society made the marriage transaction one in which the bride was given away by the bride's family to the bride-groom's family. As a genuine gift the bride can be given only once. She is accompanied by many other articles of gift out of which the dowry system developed later on. Hindu views of giving and receiving are somewhat extra-ordinary so far as marriage relations are concerned. Although theoretically marriage involved an exchange of hearts, practically it led to the practice of giving without expecting to be given anything in return. Usually the giving of a gift signifies an obligation to give, an obligation to receive and an obligation to reciprocate. The idea that it is possible to give something for nothing presupposes a social interaction without an interrelationship and is an indirect result of the Hindu philosophy of self-denial. The difficulty of practicing self-denial to an unlimited extent in the area of human relationships, particularly when natural incentives to it are lacking rapidly leads to misery on part of the sacrificing individual unless such generosity is reciprocated by the party for whom due sacrifice is intended. In practice in society the privileged persons are those who receive and the non-privileged are the ones who have to give. Ideologically these roles are reversed. The receiver's nobility obliges him to be generous. But practically it led to the denial of the dependence of the privileged. This denial of dependence, however, was also in theory only. The dependence continued in practice but was not given any recognition or value. Hindu marriage, based on the ideology of denial of self-interest gradually turned into an institution encouraging denial of self-interest without reciprocal return. The relationship between brides and bridegrooms, bride givers and bride-takers became one in which reciprocity was to a varying extent denied. The epics offer examples where women selected their husbands as a matter of free choice, and could be married formally simply by exchange of garlands or rings,



without the social ceremony taking place at all and consequently without the implication that the girl was being "given away" by the father or the guardian of the bride to the bride-groom's family. But even in such marriages, the underlying idea was that the bride offered herself to the bride-groom while the bride-groom accepted her in his family. Fundamentally, this was an expression of the fact that girls had to be kept under guardianship and protection for a longer period than boys and that this sheltering was needed and extended till they were placed under the protection of another family. Women were believed to be needing male support in ways more than men were in need of female support. While men depended on women for love, companionship, home-making, sex and child, women needed men for all these plus physical security and economic support. Even when women could support themselves economically they still needed physical protection and also extra support during the days of child-bearing and child-rearing. The sexual charms of a woman and her possible motherhood, were at once what made her attractive and valuable to the opposite sex and also caused her to appear as a burden to her husband. For a long period she was of no direct use in the economic productivity of the family but meant an extra expenditure. The extra care which was fondly given by her natal family was later given grudgingly by the bride-groom's family. The marriage contract, though contrived to be kept ideologically perfect, nevertheless lapsed into forms in which the bride's position became that of the unprivileged. The unprivileged position became apparent in several ways. Marital loyalty became a one-sided affair. Only the woman was indissolubly married while the man had the opportunity to marry as many times as he liked. Although a woman was respected as a mother and motherhood was upheld as a great value no economic importance was attached to it and it was customary to treat a woman as a minor. As a bride it was a woman's duty to make all the necessary adjustments. In her relationship with her husband she must be humble and sub-

missive and always willing to serve. Her position in her new family was always insecure and her husband should never show that he thinks her more important than his family. Although her position improves when she has a male child, her natal family has to go on contributing towards meeting the rising expenditures indirectly, by meeting the costs of childbirth and continuing to give presents for the mother and the child. A woman should forego her own wishes and desires to comply, with those of the kinship group to which she is 'given as a gift.

The counterpart of the unimportant position of the daughter-in-law is the important position of the son-in-law and is expressive of the unilateral relationship between bride-givers and bride-takers. The stream of presents from the bride's family and the life-long devotion of the bride to her husband's place the bride-groom and his family under no obligation to pay anything back in return. A woman who does not bring in sufficient gifts has a bitter fate in her new home. A bride's father, if he is self-respecting, never accepts food or water in his son-in-law's family. When a woman visited her parent's home, it was formally impossible for her to go back to her husband's home until she was called back. Neither had the girl's party any honourable means of undoing the decision of the husband's family of not to call her back. Exogamy or marrying the daughter outside the natal locality was favoured because it would reduce contacts with the natal family and thus reduce the risks of marriage. Children formed one of the main purposes of marriage, and a man could marry and remarry as many times as he liked for having a son born to him. The marriage which brought him a child became his principal marriage. A woman was allowed to divorce or remarry only amongst the lower classes, where woman enjoyed a degree of economic independence as well.

Such conditions continued in Indian society until the effects of British colonization upon Indian culture became noticeable. Conditions were created which helped middle-class and

aristocratic women to attain economic independence. Remarriage while the spouse by the first marriage lived was prohibited. Daughters were granted shares in the father's property. Child marriage was prohibited, widow remarriage was introduced. Dissolution of marriage could no longer be arbitrary or one-sided but had to be through mutual consent and based upon sufficient grounds.

While the modern values in the existing Indian society are in many ways improvements upon their preceding stages it cannot be said that the present condition is totally satisfying. Many of the difficulties in the life of a woman persist unchanged even today. While the contact with the west has brought in welcome changes in Indian philosophical perspectives it has also brought in ideas which need thought and attention before they can be experimented within society. Our new marriage and divorce laws show us how much and in what ways we have diverged from the older concept of marriage. The changes represent an ideology which may not be beyond examination and criticism. The conditions for a Hindu marriage now lay down that a marriage may be solemnized between any two Hindus if neither party, though capable of giving a valid consent at the time of marriage, has been suffering from mental disorder of such a kind or to such an extent as to be unfit for marriage and the procreation of children or has been subject to recurrent attacks of insanity or epilepsy. Conditions for nullity of marriage and divorce lay down that any marriage shall be voidable and may be annulled by a decree of nullity on the ground that the marriage has not been consummated owing to the impotence of the respondent or on grounds of insanity, epilepsy and mental disorder or if the respondent was at the time of marriage pregnant by some person other than the petitioner.

Any marriage may be dissolved by a decree of divorce on a petition by either party that the other party has, after the solemnization of the marriage, had voluntary sexual intercourse

with any person other than his or her spouse or has been incurably of an unsound mind, suffering continuously or intermittently from mental disorder. The expression mental disorder means mental illness, arrested or incomplete development of the mind, psychopathic disorder or any other disability of mind and includes schizophrenia. Psychopathic disorder means a persistent disorder or disability of mind (whether or not including subnormality of intelligence) leading to abnormally aggressive or irresponsible conduct and whether or not it is susceptible to medical treatment. Marriage can also be dissolved if the respondent had been suffering from incurable form of leprosy or from venereal diseases in a communicable form, or has not been heard of as being alive for a period of seven years or more by persons who would naturally have heard of it. The conditions show a great deal of emphasis has been laid on mental illness as a sufficient ground for nullification of marriage, whether or not such illness is available to treatment. Advancement of scientific knowledge has made clear that mental illness is as much an illness as any other physical illness, -often having some physiological cause. Conditions of mental deficiency need care and compassion. Abandonment of a person accepted as a life-partner on grounds of illness would amount to cruelty. The life tied with such a partner may indeed be very hard and deprived of the enjoyments and benefits of married life in a very important sense. But our attitude, in marriage should not be one of rights only but there should be consciousness of what is due from us as well. If a mother could not abandon a sick son, nor a sick brother, why should a husband or a wife be entitled to breakup their ties on grounds of sickness? Like all relationships and efforts, our marriages also can bring us either positive bliss or impose upon us a heavy burden of duties and miseries. We should be prepared for both in our lives. This applies to cases of leprosy and venereal diseases as well. Unless such conditions were wilfully suppressed

by the respondent at the time of marriage they represent no voluntary behaviour through which the respondent tries to undo the marriage contract of remaining united in love and friendship with the spouse and sharing the sustenance. If one of the partners becomes so severely handicapped as to be unable to perform his duties towards the other spouse then the proper code of conduct towards him would be to help him overcome his shortcoming or else to encourage him to bear his misfortune without any sense of shame or guilt. Unless there is the preparedness to courageously suffer on account of marriage one does not earn the right to enjoy the fruits of marriage. Although the scopes of law and morality do not coincide there is a large area where the two overlap and the law of each land ideally tends to protect what is felt desirable by the moral feeling of its people. A law may also aim at introducing changes in the morals of the people and then appear to be at variance with their ethical standards. But even in such cases the new legislation is inspired by other values which are judged to be better than the values embodied in the prevailing moral consciousness and thus moral considerations are at work behind such changes in laws.

Unwillingness to undergo deprivations on account of some involuntary inability on part of the spouse characterize the conditions which justify the dissolution of marriage on grounds of impotence or inability to procreate children. In fact, it is only an infliction on men of the injustice and suffering which in the past the men inflicted on women and is as cruel and unjustifiable as was the other. When we marry we do expect to have a happy conjugal life and to raise a family but if these expectations cannot be fulfilled due to some incapacity of the spouse for which he or she is not responsible then that inability should not be allowed to appear as a sufficient ground for causing grievous hurt to

the disabled party through denial of relationship. We marry for sex, we marry for children, we marry for making a home together, for physical and spiritual cohabitation and to some, for livelihood as well. Each of these purposes have their place in marriage but marriage fulfils more than one need. When we marry we intend to satisfy all needs together and we cannot say that we married for any one of these needs so that we cannot justifiably declare marriage null and void because one or the other of these needs cannot be met. Each of these needs are in some sense basic to human beings but there is evidence that each can be controlled or fruitfully substituted by other interests in life. In very rare conditions when none of these needs can be fulfilled through marriage and where denial of marriage relation will fail to have any impact on the mind of the respondent or on his well-being or on the mind or well-being of the children born out of such marriage, or where there has been a voluntary infidelity can dissolution of marriage be justified, particularly where marriage is a matter of free personal choice. Children no doubt form an important purpose of marriage and once born they are perhaps our most important consideration in regulating the pattern of the rest of our life. I agree with Bertrand Russell that once children come in, the relationship between husband and wife no longer remain of primary importance and should not be allowed to come in the way of the child's welfare. Once parents, the adults should take note of the child's psychology and refrain from fulfilling self-interests at the cost of the child's interests. The parents, being adults, are more fitted to make efforts at self-denial than the child who is a minor and immature and has as yet seen and enjoyed but little of life. Emotional deprivation could be far worse for him than for an adult. Lack of a strong policy to check self-seeking and irresponsible behaviour on part of parents without reference to the child's well-being may eventually lead to a generation of maladjusted

adults. The responsibility of both the parents are equal towards their child. Although there is a lot of truth in Ms. Beauvoir's description of a woman as "a victim of the species" meaning thereby that women are more handicapped than men in trying to assert their freedom on account of the bondage of mother-hood, nevertheless the theoretical necessity of the father's role in reproduction places him under a practical obligation to further the conditions of the child's welfare. But what appeared as a disadvantage to Ms. Beauvoir appeared as a positive advantage to Victoria Occampo of Argentina. She felt that by being close to the child the woman had power over the future man. She had the power to reshape the future of society by the control and power which she exercised over the child's growth and destiny. But however important children are once they are born, they cannot be said to be the sole purpose of getting married. Until they come into existence the relationship of the spouses to each other is of primary importance.

In spite of the many set-backs suffered by an Indian woman in her family life it cannot be denied that the life of a woman and for that matter the life of a man and a child as well are generally emotionally more satisfying than the lives of their counterparts in the West. There are very few cases of divorce in spite of the fact that the provision for it exists and the rate of increase in juvenile delinquency is much slower in comparison to the rate of increase in other crimes. I have known childless couples living together in marriage quite happily, neither barrenness nor impotence interfering in any obviously serious way with their enjoyment of domestic happiness. This is partially the effect of the traditional philosophy of self-denial, at least so far as women are concerned, but so far as men are concerned this effect is due to contact with western ideas which trained them to value an individual for his or her own sake and not as means to an end. Valuing an individual for his own

sake also makes one more compassionate and forbearing, for then we attempt to understand him as a creature with certain limitations as well as perfections and do not intend to judge him only in the light of some ideal condition. While an individual is a value by himself, it is equally true that an individual is constantly involved in relations with other individuals, single or in groups and that the value and recognition that he claims for himself must be accorded to the other individuals surrounding him. The according of such recognition is neither theoretically possible nor can it be practically implemented without some amount self-denial on the part of every individual. This indeed is one of the basic principles of collective existence.

Compared to India, divorce rates are very high in the USA, indicating that most marriages are ending in unhappiness. To avoid the heavy rate of divorces and unhappy marriages the younger generation often chooses now to live together without getting married. Between living together and getting married there exists the important difference of the absence of a social or legal contract. Most couples living together also prefer not to have children or get married upon the arrival of children. Living together seems to be preferred by men and women alike since it enables them to enjoy all the comforts and pleasures of domestic and a conjugal life while at the same time not placing them under any compulsory commitment or obligation towards each other than that dictated by their own conscience. Both parties enjoy a greater degree of personal freedom than they would have enjoyed had they lived within the marriage relation. Here again however, we find the individual geared towards the obtainment of a maximum amount of pleasure for oneself and unwilling to impose any restriction on one's liberty or convenience for the sake of another individual. Each party treasures his own liberty most of all and that is the most important force acting behind the refusal to make any



life-long commitments or to begin family. Living together is started without even the expectation that such living would be a life-long affair. Living together, however, has certain practical as well as theoretical disadvantages. The practical disadvantages would appear to be on the biological as well as on the psychological plane. The biological difficulty is linked with the constant necessity of keeping the possibility of conception nil. For most young couples who never married or had any children before would desire the practice of only methods temporary contraception. Most of the methods of temporary contraception, however, are accompanied with health hazards if practiced for an indefinite length of time which means that it may become advisable to withdraw from such measures from time to time, which in its turn, may make it necessary to abstain from a sexual life for those contraception free periods. For married couples such temporary abstinence is not strictly necessary for they can still afford to experiment with the rather risky practice "safe-period" intercourse, for they have the marital bond to fall back upon for ensuring the advantages of a joint parenthood to the child. The emotional preparedness for accepting each other as a lifelong companion usually generates a greater degree of mutual understanding and compassion which may make such periods of temporary abstinence not unbearable for married couples. If they have no children they can look forward to having them in the future. If they have children already they can be expected to have a number of other interests to fill their lives which are not available to couples who do not have children not plan to have any at any time. Couples living together are committed, to the practice of contraception throughout their lives or else to accept living together as a temporary phase to ultimately end in marriage, in which case living together can no longer be an alternative to marriage, independent enough to be a substitute for marriage, but can

only be looked upon as leading to marriage or some form of "trial marriage". Living together may also subject the couple to an intense emotional strain in not being able to let their love bloom to its full capacity, in not being able to allow unreserved love for each, other in having to refrain from an unconditional spiritual surrender to the other which the acceptance of a lifelong acceptance makes easy. Consciously or subconsciously it makes us hesitant, cautions, calculating and fearful. The fear of giving way to love which can be powerful enough to come like a tide and sweep our being away from the shores of self centered existence can be no less strenuous and exhausting than the fear of being enchained by life-long commitments in marriage.

Nena and George O Neill have proposed "open marriage" as a new form of marriage to replace living together. They believe that traditional marriage has become unfit for achieving the end intended to be achieved through marriage and offer a new formula for reaching the goal. Their main argument against living together is that the social or legal sanction behind marriage of which living together is resistive is necessary for solemnizing the relation of men and women living together for sex and companionship. The guidance of love or conscience, the so-called internal law, may not be enough to bind together two lives apparently in love with each other and desirous of living together. Although presence of this internal pressure is desirable in marriage as well, there is the extra need of an external force in the form of social or legal approval and disapproval to keep the union of lives reasonably steady and stable. Such stability is necessary for individual and social happiness because being in love may not mean exactly the same for both the parties supposed to be in love. It may mean a greater emotional involvement to one party then it may

eman to another. It may also mean that one party ceases to be in love and desires to withdraw while the other party may not be mentally prepared for such break off. Freedom to separate would in such a circumstance bring unhappiness to the other party. In marriage such desertion cannot be effected without sufficient reason and without the approval of law. Marriage and divorce laws, would therefore be protective of the weaker party's interests which can only be ensured by curtailing the assertion of unlimited freedom by another individual. The O'Neills are critical of traditional marriage on the ground that it imposes too many unnecessary restrictions on individual liberty and is incongenial to the growth of an honest companionship between the partners, which lead them to describe it as "closed marriage." Open marriage, however, is based upon the inconsistency of demanding the fullest possible freedom for individual self-assertion along with the necessity of an external force to shape the course and extent of such assertion. It is permissive of having intimate relations outside marriage, urges one to be civilized enough to tolerate the growth of such relations and not consider them as disruptions to the marriage certainly needs an applause for encouraging each partner to understand the needs and rights of the other to develop his or herself to the fullest possible extent and to co-operate in such development, it needs to note that an individual's nature might contain positive as well as negative features. An unrestricted development of all our propensities may not finally be conducive to the growth of the positive qualities of the other partner. This is true not only inside the marriage relation but applies to any human relationship. Harmonious growth is possible only when each partner is prepared to undergo the necessary sacrifice for allowing the flowering of the other. Perhaps the ideology of "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty" needs to be supplemented by the idea "reciprocal sacrifice is the price of liberty".



**PART 1**  
**ESSAYS ON THEORY**



## **TOWARDS A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL WOMEN'S MOVEMENT**

*Ketaki Kushari Dyson*

You've been a girl long enough  
You've bound your hair long enough  
From now on  
Waiting for your father-in-law from market  
Waiting for your husband from the fields  
Waiting for your brother-in-law from the forest  
A dark Prison  
Heavy iron on your arms  
Heavy weight on your head  
The dark prison your husband  
The heavy iron your child  
The heavy weight your house 1

The eloquent witness to the bondage of the feminine condition in traditional society is a folk song from Macedonia. If we ponder on its message a few moments, it should help us to realize that the women's movement of our time is not, cannot

be, a localized, minority cult or a passing enthusiasm, but that it is an inevitable development in the story of human evolution. Over the centuries our species has been mainly chained to the exigencies of survival, begetting and food-getting, and the slavery of women has been a part of that process, a role that perhaps could not have been avoided, but who knows for sure ? Life has been pretty harsh for most men, with the grind of subsistence agriculture and the risks of war ; the surplus has usually gone to small, privileged class. Life has been harsher for most women. But in the fabric of history we also see a thread of hope, a bright thread that we cannot get rid of, which keeps twining itself with the grey and the dark : Nature coming into consciousness, analyzing, examining, trying to understand itself, learning to exercise some control over its own spontaneous activities. The liberation of women, like the liberation of any other oppressed group is a part of this ongoing process in which the spirit of inquiry takes hold of our environment and alters it, puts its stamps on it. Eventually the writings on the wall merge with the wall, become the wall. The movement is not just an end in itself but a part of the continuous process of the self-liberation of our species. There is a movement towards more real freedom for all : men, women and children, all races and nationalities. How can we be anything but hopeful and positive about this removal of our chains ?

In a broad sense the movement has a long history, but in a narrower sense the women's movement as we understand it today is only about a decade old. Yet already within the space of those ten years the women's movement has made a considerable impact on the world. Certainly, there are variations in the quantity and quality of this impact between culture and culture, between the highly industrialized nations and the primarily rural areas of the world ; nevertheless, in every society seeds have now been lodged which must germinate, grow into trees, eventually bear fruit. This is a movement that cuts across classes, is relevant in conditions of poverty as well as in conditions of affluence, in



'capitalist' as well as 'socialist' countries.

I have been reading a book written by Jenneke Arens and Jos van Beurden, a Dutch couple who studied the condition of poor peasants and women in a village in Bangladesh.<sup>2</sup> The village has been given the fictitious name of Jhagrapur, meaning 'The Village of Quarrels'. I was especially interested in the account as this village, the real name of which has been kept secret, is supposed to be twelve miles away from Meherpur, a village which is the scene of my very first and in some respects idyllic childhood memories : I should mention that I was born seven years before the partition of Bengal. I cannot say that I agree with everything in this book, as it is written with an overall vision somewhat different from mine, but it has been reassuring to find that the radical lines committed to the cause of change in the Third World are at last coming round to the crucial importance of the women's movement even in the poorest regions of the world.

Initially we had planned to study power relations between poor and rich peasants, local politics etc., but gradually it became clear to us that another kind of domination, that by men of women, was an essential aspect of exploitation as well. So we started to include these relationships in our study more and more. The result of this situation has been this separate section on women. Our initial neglect of the problem of exploitation of women was mainly caused by our own male-biased way of thinking ; it does not mean that the problem is marginal and inconspicuous. On the contrary, during our stay in the village we discovered its importance and its interconnection with other issues. When thinking about radical changes in favour of the poor peasantry and towards greater equality, it is essential to realize what role women have to play in this struggle.....

.....the class struggle and the struggle for women's liberation should be carried on at the same time.<sup>3</sup>

In another book I have recently read, a story for children written by a Thai woman of Chinese origin, the same message

comes through, that women must play a crucial role in changing the lives of the peasants of Thailand.<sup>4</sup>

Arens and van Beurden catalogue the familiar list of evils Women in 'Jhagrapur' are doubly exploited, as poor people and as women. They have a decidedly inferior status both within the home and outside it, which is reinforced and consolidated by Islam ( In 'Jhagrapur' there was, at the time of the authors' stay there, only *one* Hindu family left. ) *Purdah* is strictly enforced. Women do not work directly on the land, but do practically everything else : child-rearing, domestic chores, and ancillary agricultural activities, all of which, in a poverty-stricken, pre-industrial society, involve back-breaking physical labour. This is what the women of village told the authors :

We have to clean the house,  
wash clothes and make quilts,  
to boil paddy, husk and dry it ;  
we have to grind wheat  
cook rice, take care of children and animals ;  
we work all day long.<sup>5</sup>

The tragedy is that all this labour is regaded by the men-folk of the village as *not productive* : its value is denied ; nor does it earn women any particular affection or honour.

Marriage in 'Jhagrapur' is, of course, an economic contract. A wife is her husband's property, a slave to cook for him, to give him sexual satisfaction, to bear his children, especially male children, and to help him in every other way, but without honour.

Women are also sexually exploited by their husbands and some of them by other men as well. They serve mainly as sexual objects to satisfy the needs of men. Men are not primarily interested in a woman as a person, but rather as a female body. The sexual needs of a woman are denied and she is supposed to remain passive and restrained. As a result many women are sexually frustrated and

preoccupied with sex. They have to channel their sexual needs in other, more indirect ways, e.g. through talking and joking about it. Several men and women engage in secret relationships, which for some poor peasant women is a source of some extra income. Such relationships are accepted as long as they are not openly talked about but when it becomes common knowledge, e.g. when a woman gets pregnant, everyone talks shamefully about the guilty persons who will be punished by the village court. If a rich landowner makes a woman, who is not his wife, pregnant, he will in most cases not be punished as he has enough power to prevent it.<sup>6</sup>

In 'Jhagrapur' women don't count. They can be 'beaten mercilessly with sticks, bricks, copper spoons and other tools.'<sup>7</sup> They cannot afford to protest too openly against maltreatment because of their economic dependence on their husbands.

And yet even in this grim weaving there is a bright thread of hope. The women of 'Jhagrapur' have usually 'internalized' their oppression by accepting their inferior status and by being resigned to it—but *not always*. Women *do react*, there *is* an element of protest, both covert and overt; so there is 'some perspective for change'. These women would like, if possible, not to have large families, not to have to observe fasts, not to be beaten by their husbands. One woman protests by getting sick every time she has a quarrel with her husband; in this way she attracts attention to the injustice done to her. A woman may commit suicide or 'put on a suicide act', again to draw attention to her plight. One woman had the courage to make an ironical comment in the presence of her husband: "My husband, who is my husband? Don't you know that I have no husband?"<sup>8</sup> Arens and Van Beurden feel that this spark of protest may be a starting point for mobilizing poor peasant women.

As the mentioned protests and observations indicate that the women feel a need to improve their situation, the issues can be used as a starting point for organizing women to bring about a change in particular situations and for continuing to broader issues. The protests can be channelled into effective actions. We came across one example in

Jhagrapur ; it concerned the dissatisfaction expressed by several women with the number of children they have. We discovered that once we had made people aware of the possibility of controlling the number of children themselves by using contraceptives, many people became really interested and willing to do something about it. This issue could have been used as a starting point for a much broader program to organize women, leading finally to radical changes.<sup>9</sup>

In other words, birth control can become a key issue for any radical movement in the Third World. Taking control over their own bodies, their own fertility, is, for women, the first step towards taking control over their lives, their destinies. It is a pivot built by modern science on which the rest of the liberation programme turns. The Catholic Church must realize this very acutely, which is why it opposes effective family planning programmes. It knows that this one step, once freely allowed, will bring down the old order. I am sure that family planning is going to be a very important issue in the struggle in Latin America.

This issue is also a point where the interest of the individual woman and the real long-term interest of the Third World and indeed of the whole world meet. A high birth rate was once necessary for our survival, but right now the reverse is true. To see this is to adopt a scientific attitude to life, and we must have one. Science is an indispensable dimension. Of course, there are other dimensions too.

I am trying to say that the women's movement, like any other human struggle, cannot afford to be one-dimensional : it has to be multi-dimensional. Science is one of the dimensions. It has taken us a long time to shape modern science and to apply it for the improvement of the human condition, yet once this application is set in motion it gathers its own cumulative momentum and liberates enslaved attitudes. Once any technology which is ameliorative of the human condition becomes available, it has a way of invading the world, and this, I think, is all to the good. It may take a few years or a few decades, but sooner or later the innovation is bound to win out and like a

weighty glacier carry with it the debris of the taboos, prejudices, and superstitions that blocked its way.

One dimension leads to another because all human issues are interconnected. The progress of birth control in the Third World is hindered by a number of factors: the economic dependence of women, the lack of education, a high rate of infant mortality, the peasant need for sons in unmechanized agriculture, the need to have children who would support their parents in their old age, and so on. Action, therefore, has to be simultaneously concentrated on all these fronts. From there to politics is a short route. Political action necessary to bring about these social and economic changes has to be sought, which is precisely why the women's movement is bound to have a significant political dimension in the developing world. I myself have greater faith in action that brings people together than in action that polarizes people, but in regions where extreme economic distress prevails, where life has become barbarically harsh, sustaining such an ideal may prove a Herculean task. Clearly, different areas of the world are going to need different strategies.

Where religious authorities oppose birth control, confrontation with such authorities will become unavoidable. Some people will disapprove of some methods of contraception. Individual conscience and the need of the community both have their claims: there will be disputes, giving the movement an ethical dimension. The controversy about abortion will continue until some technological breakthrough in contraception renders it, as I am sure it will, irrelevant. Science and technology have a characteristic way of bypassing such disputes by means of innovations.

But what is the use of birth control if men and women are not going to make love? When sex is no longer for procreation only, when every embrace does not threaten a pregnancy, when every pregnancy does not smell of mortality, what shall we do with human sexuality? The long battle between ascetics and

puritans on the hand and poets and pleasure-lovers on the other may well have to come to an end : human sexuality may have to be released for play and pleasure, for physical, psychical, spiritual union between the partners, bringing us to the valuable dimensions of art, poetry and mysticism in the women's struggle. (The ascetics and puritans will probably evolve into a breed of super-technologists who give all or most of their energies to the building of robots and spaceships ! ).

I think that relationships between men and women will undergo a sea-change and grow into something rich and strange. Men and women are going to come together, as they are already beginning to, for diverse forms of friendship, companionship, and collaboration. The closed, one-to-one relationship marked by jealousy, selfishness, and mutual appropriation will give way to more open relationships committed to each other's real growth.<sup>10</sup> This will also bring about the decay of the old style sexual rivalry between males and between females ; so there will be more tension free brotherhood between men and sisterhood between women. In the same process the taboos on homosexual love are likely to be lifted.

Eros may well shed its ancient association with sin and pain : nobody will need to feel guilty, hurt, or rejected, which is a cheering prospect. Marriage as we understand it today and the patriarchal family are going to be profoundly altered. Some people panic when they hear such prospects discussed, as if all hell would break loose if familiar patterns were to change. Yet there was a time when these institutions did not exist in their present forms. These are social institutions, and social institutions are not immutable : they are always changing. Compulsory monogamy for women is essentially an institution to establish the paternity of offspring : it has nothing to do with our human nature, with the way we are. Men have always reserved for themselves the right to have multiple relationships, whether in marriage, as in the East, or outside it, without much social opprobrium, as in the West. Some people may indeed prefer

to have a monogamous relationship at the centre of their lives. but it has to be their own choice, not an ideal enforced from above. Others may decide otherwise. Often people speak of human love as though it was a contagion, to be locked in an isolation ward or a property relationship, to be maintained by legal contracts, but fortunately for us it is neither a disease to be kept under control nor a material object which diminishes if shared out. In India we have been exhorted for several centuries to accept Sita as the model of womanhood. Indeed, she is admirable in many ways, but no *one* pattern of virtue will do for *all* times, and it may become appropriate for us to cultivate the virtues of Draupadi as well.

The women's movement is clearly going to accelerate the decline of the nuclear family, the inadequacies of which as a child-rearing institution are now clichés of sociology. A greater participation of the community in child-rearing is required. Again, the alternative is not the patriarchal joint family : other experiments will have to be made. All this does not mean that we are going to care less for one another, or that we shall cease to have duties towards those we love, including our children. On the contrary, we are likely to develop more sincere, lasting, nurturing relationships with a wider circle of people than now, including other people's children. That is also the way towards a more truly caring, humanitarian society, towards the attrition of war. No doubt the solution of one problem will unfurl another problem, which will then have to be tackled by further work, but that is an existential situation. There is no freedom without endless vigilance and hard work.

## II

I have been trying to establish that the women's movement has to become a multi-dimensional struggle. We need continued investment in scientific research and technological innovations ; an openness to change ; collective awareness,

determination, and strategies leading to profound social, economic, and political changes ; individual conscience and courage aiming at the transformation of our private lives, so that we can act for ourselves even if others are not ready, hoping to carry others with us as best as we can. ( And it is amazing how much we can achieve in this direction with the help of faith, active love, imagination, and perseverance). While we need more dedicated people to agitate openly for better rights and opportunities for women, we also need more realistic, flexible thinking more dialogue in depth on issues such as patterns of education and employment marriage, contraception, and child-rearing. The scientist who researches into safer and more effective means of contraception ; the doctor, nurse, midwife, or health visitor who brings better health care into the community ; the M.P. who agitates in parliament for better legal rights for women and children ; the lawyer who helps the battered wife and her children ; the employer who creates part-time jobs and offers nursery facilities ; the teacher who is willing to teach boys domestic science and girls carpentry ; the parents who teach their sons to be tender as well as tough and their daughters to be tough as well as tender ; the man who is not ashamed to look after his child while his wife goes to a conference and the woman who is not guilty about going to a conference while her husband looks after her child ; the writer or artist or intellectual who is brave enough to live the new morality here and now and helps in the nurturing of a new generation of young men and women with liberated attitudes : all these and many others can be legitimately regarded as workers involved in a common struggle. Diversity of activity is the key to the movement's success. Each one of us can contribute something to the movement, and diversity, as any biologist will tell us, is essential for a healthy evolution

It is in the west that the woman's movement has reached maximum self-awareness and analytical capacity. I have in front of me a book entitled *Working It Out*, where 23 women writers,



artists, scientists, and scholars from the U.S.A. talk about their lives and work.<sup>11</sup> They discuss frankly how the fact of being a woman has affected their lives, especially their work-lives, and how they have attempted to solve the problems that have beset them. It is a moving book recording struggles against institutions and attitudes without us as well as mental attitudes within us, such as apathy, diffidence, or cowardice, which shackle us, but it does build hope out of despair. I was alternately elated and moved to tears as I read it : I felt like a lonely Jungle fighter listening on the wireless to the voices of 23 fellow-fighters in other remote parts of the Jungle. I could identify with *this* struggle in the life of *this* woman or *that* struggle in the life of *that* woman. When the book ended, it was like the radio going dead, leaving me again in my loneliness.

Some of the stories are incredible, tragic, yet they must be true. What Evelyn Fox Keller, a physicist, Naomi Weisstein, an experimental psychologist, have to say about the struggles of women in the science departments of American universities, particularly at Harvard, should cause all academic scientists and Harvardians to blush for shame.

Amelie Oksenberg Rorty, a Professor of philosophy, offers much valuable insight into the special problems which women intellectuals in the West face today, because of massive unemployment and lack of opportunities among qualified women, problems which I have been forced to face because of my long residence in Britain and which professional women in India may not have faced so acutely as yet.

The truth is that, for most people, the regular companionship of colleagues working in roughly the same area is not only a support but a virtual necessity. Even what seems like solitary work is often social in nature ; one has to take the last paragraph down the hall and try it out on someone, one has to try to explain a thesis to a skeptical seminar. It is there, and not in the totally solitary environment, that work gets done...an intellectual needs the sustaining life of colleagues.....12

Having to do intellectual work from a situation of enforced isolation, without funds, without encouragement, without the stimulation of dialogues and discussions, without the esteem of colleagues and students, and without any hope of advancing one's prospects by means of one's labour : this is a situation familiar to many highly qualified women in the West today, one with which I am myself familiar.

Amelie Rorty also shows how professional frustration in a wife can eventually cause couple to move away from each other. That a woman's struggle to establish a work-life of her own can take a heavy toll on her personal life and cause the breakdown of her marriage is a message that comes through clearly in the book as a whole.

One could continue from this point and elaborate that this is not necessarily due simply to the selfishness of the husband. Rather, there is a danger inherent in the situation of one or both partners in a marriage being excessively exhausted and frustrated, as young professional couples with small children often are, in fact. Even when the husband is generous and meticulously cooperative, trying his best to help his wife in her struggles the relationship between them may disintegrate as between the inmates of a prison or a mental hospital. The friendship and mutual forbearance may indeed remain, but the magic of eros may evaporate. The seriousness of the problem should not be underestimated.

Recently I have done some interpreting for women from Bangladesh in an Oxford clinic. Although without any formal education and unable to communicate with their doctors in English, they are extremely articulate in Bengali. In one woman my sympathetic queries triggered off a volcanic explosion of grievances relating to her unsatisfactory sexual life. If women trained from childhood to a stoical acceptance of their sufferings can feel so explosive, is it surprising that those women who have a much higher expectation from life will begin to feel angry and bitter when things begin to go wrong in significant areas of their lives ?

We must realize that in the past virtually the only way in which society coped with any form of marital disagreement, difficulty, or tension was to preach submission and resignation to the wife. There is a classic, unforgettable portrayal of such a situation, written by Kalidasa with superb control, clarity, and great compassion for the woman, in the fifth act of his *Abhijnana-sakuntala*. Let us take a quick look at it.

The King, Dusyanta, under a curse, has failed to recognize Sakuntala, whom he had married in secret by the *gandharva* rite and who now stands before him, pregnant. (Sociologically, the *gandharva* rite or marriage by mutual choice was basically the legitimization of a seduction or a love affair which had been consummated.) The two young hermits escorting Sakuntala—her adoptive father's disciples and therefore like brothers to her—do not really believe a word of what the King has been saying, but nevertheless see no way out except to enforce the codes of a patriarchal society. After angry and bitter reflections on the folly of secret affairs and the deceptive cunning practised by princes they decide that their sister must be left with the King. He is the husband; he can do what he likes with her: take her or leave her. Sakuntala is appalled that having been deceived by her lover-husband, she is also about to be deserted by her family. Weeping, she starts to follow her friends. Gautami, the elderly hermitess and aunt-like figure, Sakuntala's third escort, stops, turns back, urges the angry young men to take pity on Sakuntala: a moving moment of female solidarity. Sarnagarava, one of the young men, turns back and pounces on Sakuntala ferociously with fraternal, paternal, patriarchal rage:

Kim purobhage svatantryam avalambase ?

Forward woman ! Are you trying to be independent ?

Sakuntala trembles. (Love, says Shulamith Firestone, is the pivot of women's oppression today.<sup>13</sup> Has it not been so always ?) She has already shown her independence once by

marrying the King in secret ; she was trying to assert her independence once more, but her 'brothers' will not allow it. They feel that she has let the family down and enough's enough. Sarnagarava tells her that if she indeed is the kind of woman the King insinuates she is, then her father has no use for her, but if she knows herself to be pure and speaking the truth, then :

Patigrhe tava dasyamapi ksamam.

Even servitude should be acceptable to you in your husband's home.

Tension mounts as the King denies once more that he ever married Sakuntala. Sarnagarava insinuates that the King has simply chosen to forget her because of some subsequent attachment. Dusyanta repeats that he is in a terrible dilemma. Is he under some delusion, or is the woman lying ? Should he be guilty of rejecting his own wife, or should he commit the sin of accepting another man's wife or mistress as his own ? He begs the Priest to intervene and advise him. The Priest comes up with the obvious immediate solution that Sakuntala must be detained until her confinement and the child scrutinized. After he has led her away, an epiphany takes place off stage. Sakuntala is rescued by her real mother, a celestial nymph, and removed to a remote celestial hermitage where, we quietly know, she must give birth and rear her royal son, endure a long period of cathartic suffering until the curse lifts and she can be reunited with her husband.

I have indulged in this detour because the scene just described, justly celebrated in Sanskrit drama, highlights very effectively the attitude and message of patriarchal society towards woman, while also drawing our unequivocal sympathy towards her. The problems we talk about today have, of course, been recognized by writers and artists for centuries.

Forward woman ! Are you trying to be independent ?

Even servitude should be acceptable to you in your husband's home.

Again and again this doctrine has been rammed down the throats of women in the teeth of the most intolerable situations. What the woman of today, whether she is an American intellectual, or the wife of a Bangladeshi immigrant to Britain, is often saying is quite simply : 'Yes, I *am* trying to be independent. No, this situation is *not* acceptable to me.'

To come back to the problems of the woman who is trying to establish a work-life of her own, I found the evidence given by Diana Michener, a photographic artist, in *Working It Out* very moving :

I think the reason I am constantly flirting with personal anarchy is that everything in my life overlaps. I move from one activity to another without any definite boundaries. Every part of what I am or trying to be is lived within my house. My darkroom is between the laundry and the kitchen, my shooting studio is in a corner of my bedroom, and I find it difficult to shed my house and family and enter into the privacy of my work. I have tried going out of my house, walking around the block a few times, and re-entering only as a "photographer." It works sometimes, but not always.

The hardest time is the morning, I wake up feeling vacant, weightless like the shadows of trees ; everything appears incomprehensible, floating in a dense body of water.....I am thankful for my children ; they pull me directly into the day. There are the hugs and the good-mornings, the breakfasts and the definitions—I'll be home at three-fifteen, I have a flute lesson, are you going out tonight ? And there is the flurry of their setting off—the arguing and the laughing, or both, but always an abundant, eager movement out into the street. I am glad for them : they have brushed off the night. After their departure, I prepare for the next flurry—my husband. We have breakfast together. It's often a disconcerting ritual. I keep myself quiet. I smile a lot. I concentrate on the minute exchanges of daily schedules. I want him to leave quickly I don't want him to ask me any questions about my photographic work ; I am afraid he will block my view. If he gets too close, I may become all pliable and dependent and say, "Do n't leave me. I'm jealous of you, your office and community of people. I want to go somewhere too ; I don't want to work alone today. Take me with you, I'll be a good girl, please..."

I don't want to be that little girl anymore—soft and expectant, dreaming of fairy tales and playmates. And, besides, I have made my

choice. Still, stepping up to that first morning embrace of work is intimidating. Everyone else has been signaled away to a socially approved destination, and I am left to make up my own. I feel the panic of wandering in the empty hall. It's that ghastly female stuff in me—the seduced-and-abandoned conditioning—that leaves me slightly frazzled, and makes me wish my lover, my husband, would take over the burden of choice for me. Even worse is that sometimes I am pushed back into the territory of my childhood, and become for a moment the little girl who used to sit shivering in her nightgown in the dark on the stairs listening to the grown-up voices below and wishing terribly to be discovered and hugged, to be included. Often after my husband's last kiss, as the door closes, that child darts through me. The only way to get rid of her is to recite my daily chant : Pick up your camera, click the shutter, trust yourself in the process of your own work, don't clutter your head with other things...there are no judges. This is what I tell myself as I slither through the laundry pile and dishes and, like an alligator lumbering up onto the riverbank to catch the sun, pull myself into my work.<sup>14</sup>

I have quoted at length because of what these confessions mean personally to me. Actually, I broke down and cried when I first read these paragraphs, because I recognized here elements of my own feelings, my own situation as a woman writer citadelled within my suburban English home. Some of my own problems even go a step further, as I am also a foreigner in this country and for at least half of the time trying to write in Bengali, a language which I do not hear around me and writing in which makes me rather neurotically dependent on a thin, slow trickle of reader-response via air mail. The mail is my fragile life-line : the strain is excessive.

My English husband and I met as undergraduates at Oxford. When, after a year's teaching in India, I left a promising academic career there to come and live in England with him, he was a graduate student at Sussex, and both my mother and his mother advised me to avoid having any children until his dissertation was completed. I took that advice and supplemented his student grant by teaching part-time in a London school : I could not find a suitable job in Brighton. I had to travel

between Brighton and North London three times a week. I could have consolidated my work-position in England as a sixth form teacher, but abandoned that to accompany my husband to Canada, where our first child was born. Soon thereafter my rebellion against what was happening to my work-life began. I realized that I had to do graduate work myself so that I could get back into academic life. I had found a suitable field to work in, but it was necessary to return to England, where the material was accessible. My husband was sympathetic, left the pursuit of a university career at the post-doctoral stage, and we returned to Oxford so that I could do a doctorate there, using the resources of the Bodleian and the Indian Institute Library. I enrolled as a graduate student at the age of 29, when our first child was two years old and our second child just eight months old : in fact, I just managed to wean our second child in time to attend the necessary preliminary courses. This time my husband took a school-teaching job in the vicinity of Oxford, but ironically I received a smaller grant as a married female student than he had as a married male student. At that time in England a married female student, if married to a non-student, received, irrespective of her husband's actual income, approximately *half* the grant allotted to a single female student, a female student married to another student, and a male student, whether single or married. In fact, a male student, if married, was eligible to various allowances on behalf of dependent wife and children. I battled with the Department of Education in London on these issues, asking for a full grant, or failing that, for a reimbursement of my children's nursery school fees. There were no immediate results, but student agitation has subsequently remedied what was a gross injustice. The woman who ran the private nursery school which my children attended...there is no state nursery school in the Oxford suburb where I live...was more compassionate and enlightened than the Department of Education officials and reduced the fees for me to a nominal sum.

I had really no choice but to do my graduate work the hard

way, between nappies and feeds, with toddlers at my feet. Neither children nor graduate work could have been postponed any longer. Throughout this period I was very determined : I allowed myself no work-paralysis. I could not afford to waste any time in wondering, worrying, or moping. I was ferociously organized and worked like a robot from morning to night, running between nursery school, home, and library, washing clothes and sheets in the bath, cooking big stews, reading and taking notes resolutely while my children played with their toys on the floor. After a period of hard work for both of us, and many struggles and sacrifices, our infants grew into healthy, well-ladjusted schoolchildren, my doctorate was earned, and not long after that a book made ready for publication which since then has been a success, but there was no question of my re-entering academic life because there were no jobs or fellowships to be had. High unemployment among well-qualified people, drastic cuts in government expenditure on universities, the field of my specialization, and active discrimination by employers on the grounds of race, sex, and marital status make it virtually impossible to participate in academic life in Britain. The country is full of highly qualified women who are professionally frustrated or semi-frustrated, and I am just one of them. This is the point where the process of disintegration begins. Whether I can produce another scholar book from within a situation of almost total professional isolation remains to be seen.

The point is that just as scholarly work needs the nourishment of libraries, research funds, colleagues, students and seminars, in the same way creative, artistic work needs the direct nourishment of life, human interaction, the close observation of other people, the companionship and criticism of both 'ordinary' friends and fellow artists. A poet or a novelist needs to be inspired and stimulated, love and appreciated, needs periods of active participation in life, dipping into the river of experience, as well as periods of withdrawal and solitary creation, recollec-



tion and rumination, fermentation and crystallization. Without facilities for *both* sets of activities, he or she will languish, feel acute depression and work-paralysis, and may eventually face a breakdown.

The artist's life, in other words, has never been an easy one ; that of the female artist is even harder ; in my case exile adds an extra touch of complication. The inner core of this complication is that I have become an East-West person. I was exposed to the West at an age when I had a fully formed Indian identity in the positive sense but had not acquired any significant Indian taboos and complexes : any of these I might have had I must have shed over the years. I have learnt many valuable lessons from the West but have felt no need to pick up any Western taboos, complexes, or hang-ups. The very fact of not being fully accepted by and integrated into British society has prevented me from acquiring these. So I have been forced to remain 'pure', taking only what I esteem from both cultures, only positive traits, quietly rejecting the negative traits of both worlds. I just rely on my quiet faith that the negative qualities will one day fall away and all the positive qualities come together. This gives me a terrifying inner freedom, something which I value tremendously, which at the same time makes me a loner—I have very few true 'peers' with whom I can associate—and which nourishes my grand, perhaps somewhat grandiose vision of an international, multi-dimensional women's movement.

### III

Because I am what I am, I am very concerned that we learn to take our freedom with sweetness and light, with sanity and a thought for the future, rather than with that spirit of hatred and bitterness which mars many other liberation movements. Dogmatism, extremism, rancour, aggressiveness : I see these as further chains, to be discarded as soon as possible, not to be picked up from other movements. We have to cultivate a

feeling of charity, in its original and pure sense, towards the other sex. We are not engaged in a battle of extermination ; we are not trying to eliminate men. We are trying to achieve a juster, more harmonious, more fruitful coexistence with them, without mutual exploitation or domination. It is not enough to sing war marches only : we must also remember how to sing love songs. When peace comes, what use will victory be to us if we have forgotten how to sing love songs ? From this point of view I find some feminist writers more relevant and inspiring than others.

For instance, Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics*<sup>15</sup> is a brilliant *expose* of male chauvinism in Western literature, but it is so relentless that it can actually leave a bad taste in the mouth. After reading this book it is possible to feel : 'Well, I can never love a man again.' It is a book from which we can learn a few bitter truths and which we then have to put back on the shelf before it destroys our own *charity*. I can imagine that a sensitive man could have his self-confidence quite shattered by a reading of this book.

On the other hand, despite some bizarre 'science fiction' touches in the delineation of her Utopia, I have always found Shulamith Firestone's *The Dialectic of Sex*<sup>16</sup> a delightful and stimulating book. She writes with understanding, compassion, and a quality which I can only call 'innocence' and which I regard as very important. I share her conviction that a great many sexual taboos are going to be destroyed in the future and that love will become polymorphous in its expression.

Two books which I have recently read and found very inspiring are Anais Nin's *In Favour of the Sensitive Man and Other Essays* and *A Woman Speaks*, an anthology of her lectures, seminars, and interviews.<sup>17</sup> I have found these books refreshing and invigorating because of the warm and caring attitude towards the world expressed in them. Nin is realistic as well as optimistic. She is positive about certain current trends and about the future. She asks us to refuse to despair, to have faith

in ourselves, in our creative will, to learn to transcend obstacles and try again and again to reconstruct the world according to our dreams. She exhorts us to live the movement in our lives now. We have to live our personal lives deeply so that we can bring the enrichment from that living to our collective existence. She asks us to acquire the subtle, human art of oscillation, to view the world with poetic, mystical, loving eyes ; she knows that we need a degree of magic, of enchantment.

Occasionally Nin dismisses science and technology too impatiently and cursorily. That is very probably because she did not explore that dimension in depth and discover for herself how science and poetry do meet again after running along different paths. I also think that Nin did not fully appreciate the urgency of the political dimension in the Third World. Again this is because she had very little direct experience of this world. But we cannot afford to throw her aside because of these shortcomings. The essence of the multi-dimensional struggle is that we seize every dimension of value that presents itself to us and put it to good use. Once we have made allowances for her limitations, there is much that we can learn from these two books.

What we will have to reach...is the recognition of woman's sensual nature, the acceptance of its needs, the knowledge of the variety of temperaments, and the joyous attitude towards it as a part of nature, as natural as the growth of a flower, the tides, the movements of planets. Sensuality as nature, with possibilities of ecstasy and joy. ...We are still under the oppressive puritan rule. The fact that women write about sexuality does not mean liberation. They write about it with the same vulgarization and lower-depths attitude as men. They do not write with pride and joy.

I was asked once how I felt about men who cried, and I said that I loved men who cried, because it showed they had feeling. The day that woman admits what we call her masculine qualities, and man admits his so-called feminine qualities, will mean that we admit we are androgynous, that we have many personalities, many sides to fulfil. A woman can be

courageous, can be adventurous, she can be all these things. And this new woman who is coming up is very inspiring, very wonderful. And I love her.

All of us carry seeds of anxieties left from childhood, but the determination to live with others in close and loving harmony can overcome all the obstacles, provided we have learned to *integrate the differences*.

Watching these young couples and how they resolve the problems of new attitudes, new consciousness, I feel we might be approaching a humanistic era in which differences and inequalities may be resolved without war.

...if we gamble in depth, if we offer the deep and the genuine part of ourselves, then it's not destructible. We cannot be destroyed.

...Traumas create this mistrust of human beings, because a human being can hurt you, can desert you, can betray you. Yet I still say that it's a million times better to risk being deserted or betrayed than to withdraw into a fortress of alienation, shut the door and break the contact with others. Because then we really die. ...That is emotional death.

...I think it is wonderful that we remove taboos on whatever directions our lives take. I think the only taboos should be on not loving.

...we should be able to live out all our potential to love.

...to me the only crime is not loving. So whatever form of loving you've found, practise it. Whatever form it takes. Because I think the real thing is just to love.

The point is that it requires considerable courage to preach a doctrine of love in the world today. Nin believes that the very restrictions traditionally imposed on woman, her enforced domesticity and familial role, 'caused something very good to be born' :

Whereas men dealt in terms of nations, in terms of statistics, abstract ideology, woman, because her world was restricted to the personal, was more human. Now that she is beginning to step beyond her confines, I hope she can bring to the world the sense of the personal value of human beings, some empathy and some sympathy.

...I hope woman carries these values into the major themes and major preoccupations of our time. I have been watching women critics, women lawyers, and I see a difference (except among those who have imitated

man and have gotten where they are just by imitation). But, I mean the women who really have kept their womanhood. For example, women lawyers take more consideration of the human situation while women critics are less apt to assert their own personal convictions about how a book should be written. They are more apt to listen to the case that is made by the writer. Long centuries of listening, long centuries of receiving, of receptivity, which was so highly developed and was in some ways a limitation, became a gift also.

This is precisely what I try to do when I write reviews of Western books for the Bengali press. I try to write about books about which I can say positive things, authors I can 'present' to my readers. I try my very best to listen to the case being made by the writer. This does not mean that I suspend my critical faculties: it simply means that I remain more open to the virtues of the authors I review. Male critics—and female critics who imitate the male modality without question—can sometimes be very destructive when approaching new, experimental work, too eager to impose their own ideas of *structure* on the work of others, for instance.

When I was doing my graduate work on the journals and memoirs of the British in India in the second half of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth, I wanted to *listen* to these authors very carefully: I wanted them to *speak* to me first before I assumed any pontifical airs. Sometimes I had difficulties in explaining my way of going about things to male academics. I remember hearing *ad nauseam* the question: 'What is going to be the *thrust* of your thesis?' The honestly bawdy answer to this is simply that as I am a woman my thesis did not have a thrust to it, only *waves diffused* all over it. The same applies to the present essay.

Nin insists that we women writers become more articulate about our feelings, instincts, intuitions, that we exploit our specific feminine capacity for 'soft focus' or 'diffused awareness,' that we attempt to translate woman to man and present to men our vision of the universe. For instance, we do not have to

write about horror, boredom, and alienation just because men are writing about it. If we have experienced joy in relationships, let us not be ashamed of writing about it. Let us not be afraid of showing our affirmative, celebrative side.

I believe that in this respect India has a special contribution to make to the women's movement. We should be proud of it.

Not that we do not need numerous urgent mundane steps for the amelioration of woman's condition in India. Indeed we do, and I have already referred to some of these before. We have our Jhagrapurs too : let us not be complacent about that. But fortunately we have in India a key with the help of which we can come out of the Jhagrapur situation : our 'pagan', pre-patriarchal, androgynous heritage which we have not repudiated quite as ferociously as many other cultures have, including those within a purely Judaeo-Christian-Islamic tradition. We still have in India a direct, unbroken link with a past from which many other cultures have wilfully alienated themselves. In India there has always been a tension between the patriarchal, prescriptive, and authoritarian position on the one hand and feminine protest, questioning, and rebellion on the other, between asceticism and eroticism, between fear of the feminine and surrender to it. This tension is clearly visible in our arts, literature and religion. After all, where else in the world do people still actively worship God as Mother (not as the Mother of God, but as the Supreme Mother, which is different), or as Lover ? Whatever cynics may maintain, this does give our culture its unique flavour and endows it with an enviable openness towards the new, androgynous mentality of the women's movement, a quality which many other cultures of today, including those in the West, are very deficient in. 'Consequently I rejoice.'

Fortunately for us, the Hindu patriarchal order has already received severe blows. There are historians who complain that the impulse towards women's emancipation in the Indian Renaissance of the nineteenth century was not radical enough. I say it was a jolly good thing, a step in the right direction. We

*don't want* to go back to the days of suttee, the days when Hindu widows could not remarry. Coming nearer to our own times, we don't want to go back to the evils portrayed by Saratchandra Chatterjee. We should be glad that some struggles, at least, are over. Or if they are not, they should be : we should work towards that end. When reading about Jhagrapur, I did intermittently feel that the women there were labouring under harsher conditions than Hindu women of comparable background. The Islamic patriarchal order bars the women of Jhagrapur even from social and religious gatherings, restricts their personal movements with a draconian severity, and there seems to be no cult of motherhood, secular or religious, or of erotic mysticism to give women at least a degree of compensatory honour.

These are the subtle cultural factors that are going to make all the difference in our orientation towards the women's movement. We should make wise use of them. Richard Lannoy, a perceptive observer of India, has commented :

Despite the acute stress to which India is now subject, and despite many centuries of willed dissociation, introversion, and ecstatic enervation, the unified awareness of the Indian mind has not been irrevocably split. There is little doubt that an almost obsessive concern with the unitary and undifferentiated has precipitated India into a vortex of complexity ; this same unified sensibility has been responsible for everything great it has ever achieved. It is also reasonable to expect, therefore, that it is by bringing this quality of mind to bear on contemporary problems that India will extricate itself from its predicament.

It is this unified sensibility which we have to bring to the women's movement.

Even after two centuries of exposure to the West, the expression of emotions, instincts, intuitions, of joy and pain, the pursuit of the dream modality, unconscious, lyrical, 'feminine', are not taboo yet in Indian art and literature. I hope they never will be, because that would only be a *wasted journey*. The culture of the Bengalis, on whom the influence of Western ideas

has been the most considerable, is a very good, very encouraging example of this phenomenon. We have accepted enrichment from the West, but rejected Western dichotomies and reasserted our preference for a unified Indian sensibility. We shall find this in yesterday's Tagore, in today's Ravi Shankar or Satyajit Ray. Bengali writers have never rejected the androgynous modality. Our male writers, even when pursuing Western-style themes of horror, boredom, and alienation, are still unembarrassed about showing their 'feminine' side. They can never altogether become a Henry Miller or a Norman Mailer : they make a *volte-face* and return to a romantic mode. Basically, they are still 'men of feeling' : they can still dream, love, laugh, and weep in their writings. And because of this, I trust them. Sometimes I take them to task for getting too sentimental, too adolescent, for not being intellectual enough, but I do know that it is a lot better to be a hopeful, romantic adolescent than a hard-boiled cynic of any age.

And here perhaps is the clue to my survival as an *emigre* Indian writer in the West for a period of nearly two decades. I get so much love and esteem from my readers that I have the courage to go on. The Bengalis, and, I think, Indians in general, *are not against articulate women*. On the contrary, they seem to *like* them, *appreciate* them. I say what I want to say from my international, East-West viewpoint as outlined before, and they listen. They respect my ideas ; they are not censorious. They keep telling me that in spite of all the Western influences I have imbibed, everything I write is still deeply Indian, very Bengali. This response makes me hopeful about what educated women can achieve in India.

Above all, we must not lose heart ; we must not call our role an elitist role. We need educated women to cooperate with the less fortunate ; our education is thrown away if we do not help our less articulate sisters. What we need is not a solidarity of ignorance and superstition but a coming together, from all levels of life, of people actively seeking enlightened solutions to women's problems. We need less dogma and more dialogue.



In tune with the aims of the women's movement I have written this as a personal essay deeply related to my own life-experience rather than as a purely academic paper. I have also tried not to censor unduly my naturally ebullient, colourful, metaphorical, feminine, Indian-Bengali style while writing in English.

1. "Songs from Macedonia", translated by Andrew Harvey and Anne Pennington, Mid-Day Publications, Oxford, 1978, song no. 41.
2. Jenneke Arens and Jos van Beurden, "Jhagrapur, Poor peasants and women in a village in Bangladesh", published by the authors from P.O. Box 11742, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.
3. Ibid., p. 32.
4. Minfong Ho, "Sing to the Dawn", translated by Liu Ge, Lotus Book House, Singapore.
5. Arens and van Beurden, op. cit., p. 39.
6. Ibid, p, 52.
7. Ibid., p. 56.
8. Ibid., Chapter 7, 'Women react.'
9. Ibid., p. 65.
10. See, for instance, N. & G. O'Neill, "Open Marriage", Peter Owen, London, 1973.
11. "Working It Out, 23 Women Writers, Artists, Scientists, and Scholars Talk About Their Lives and Work", edited by Sara Ruddick and Pamela Daniels, With a Foreword by Adrienne Rich, Pantheon Books, New York, 1977.
12. Ibid., pp. 47-8.
13. Shulamith Firestone, "The Dialectic of Sex", Paladin paperback, London, 1972, p. 121.
14. "Working It Out", pp. 148-51.
15. Kate Millett, "Sexual Politics", Abacus paperback, Sphere Books Ltd., London, 1972.
16. Shulamith Firestone, op. cit.
17. Anais Nin, "In Favour of the Sensitive Man and Other Essays", W. H. Allen, London, 1978, and "A Woman Speaks", edited with an introduction by Evelyn J. Hinz, W. H. Allen, London, 1978.

## SHATTERED FEMININE IDEALS A NIETZSCHEAN APPROACH

*Eileen Bennet*

Nietzsche has long been known for his scathing remarks about women. "When you go to woman, do not forget the whip." "Is it not better to fall into the hands of a murderer than the dreams of a woman in heat? Yet there are some men who find nothing better than to lie with a woman. Mud is at the bottom of their souls." Some authors have tried to rescue Nietzsche from a strictly misogynist. reading Kathryn Parsons argues that Nietzsche's misogyny is not simple; rather, his "distaste was for the slavish character shown by nineteenth century women." Jacques Derrida claims that Nietzsche holds women in high esteem, yet he seems unaware of the sexist foundations of Nietzsche's metaphor "truth is a woman." In establishing a new understanding of truth, which is no longer understood as ground behind appearance, Nietzsche compares truth and women to make his point: "Her great art is the lie, her highest concern is mere appearance and beauty." In a few texts Nietzsche is sensitive to the high valuation women were given in Greek antiquity. Here

Nietzsche sees women as the mouthpiece of divine wisdom ; The goddesses of Greek mythology are their images : the Pythia and the Sibyl, as well as the Socratic Diotima are the priestesses out of whom divine wisdom speaks. It is unfortunate that Nietzsche did not pursue this theme further, which I think is much more respectful of women than the assumptions behind the claim that "truth is a woman." Taking a middle position, Christine Allen, suggests that Nietzsche was ambivalent toward women ; she claims that Nietzsche's negative views about women reflect his personal relationships with them.

It is neither my intention to further expose Nietzsche's misogyny, nor to defend the few texts where he pays tribute to the female gender. Nor will I enter into a psychological discussion about his personal exchanges with women. Rather, I want to use Nietzsche's insights on ideals and his methodology to elucidate the topic of feminism and social change. I will argue that there is a relationship between a feminist transformation of consciousness in the twentieth century and Nietzsche's transvaluation of values. Feminism, which can be seen as a transvaluation of previous values concerning women, is one indication of the validity of Nietzsche's prospective philosophy.

It is my view that Nietzsche was concerned with a vision for the future, a new world conception in which a transvaluation of values would take place. Nietzsche's criticism, sarcasm and irony toward the past history of Western thought was his attempt to clear the way for something new—something that he as "posthumously born" could only begin to recognize but never hope to live. Nietzsche's "philosophizing with a hammer" aims at tearing down the ideals that he believes have thwarted the development of human beings. By changing or transvaluating the values that support a weak, unproductive type of life, Nietzsche prepares the way for a strong, creative, and active one.

I see a parallel between contemporary feminism and Nietzsche's insights on (1) the functions of ideals as well as their self-destruction at this time in history ; (2) the metamorphosis

of consciousness that accompanies the disenchantment with ideals ; (3) the positive directions for social change that are suggested by Nietzsche's insights. My intention is to question what possibilities emerge once feminine ideals are shattered. It is my belief that what will be left behind, during the transition between the collapse of old social structures and the creation of new ones, are only limitations—and perhaps the nostalgic longing for a familiar and secure type of life.

### Nietzsche's Critique of Ideals

For Nietzsche metaphysical ideal generally serve pragmatic functions. They are "valuations by which we can survive in life." Nietzsche's focus is on Platonic metaphysics, which became the ideal for Western humanity. But he believes such an ideal is detrimental to human beings because it perpetuates a weak type of life rather than a strong one. Nietzsche points out that Western humanity has thus far lived according to this ideal because of psychological needs for security, certainty and stability. His intention is to show that this orientation has been "the greatest attempt to assassinate life." This is so because "if one severs an ideal from reality one debases the real, one impoverishes it, one defames it."

According to the Platonic conception, ideals are eternal, unchanging, secure and stable. The world as we ordinarily experience it is, to the contrary, temporal, changing, insecure and unstable. A valuation hierarchy is thus established between the essential and eternal knowledge of an ideal world and the less desirable knowledge of the phenomenal one. The point here is that the unchanging, essential nature of being is desired, sought after as the ideal, and valued more than the unreliable and transitory nature of appearance.

A kind of Platonism exists in the metaphysical claims about the natures of women and men. Traditional ideals portray

masculinity as aggressive, independent, rational and strong, and femininity as passive, dependent, emotional and weak. In such claims about the natures of human beings, an ideal standard becomes the goal toward which one strives and results in a devaluation of that which does not live up to the ideal. Nietzsche considered this to be life-negating. In a Nietzschean context, the ideal satisfies the need for a metaphysical ground upon which one can build the foundation of one's own life, but conformity to a life-negating ideal is dangerous because it thwarts human potential. This is compatible with a feminist perspective which maintains that the ideal of "woman" has frozen the development and recognition of women's potentialities.

For Nietzsche, the type of life that needs metaphysical ideals is weak and unable to face life directly. It has needed crutches, so to speak, to walk through the chaos. However, because of the historical location of our present epoch, the ideals that once gave life meaning and direction are no longer tenable and thus are disintegrating. Disbelief in the value of ideals causes them to shatter. For Nietzsche, the shattering of the ideals of Western humanity is painful and nihilistic. He predicts that the transitional period of nihilism would be one of disintegration, disorientation and disenchantment. There would no longer be any ground or foundation on which to base one's life and identity. Because life had been previously oriented toward the ideal, one would be left with nothing.

In *The Feminine Mystique*, Betty Friedan acknowledges the problem of identity when traditional ideals for women shatter. She explains why the suffrage movement in the 1920's, with its passionate desire for autonomy and equality, reverted in the 1950's to traditional feminine values with its emphasis on docile domestication. The important point concerning the problem of identity is that once traditional feminine values are no longer tenable, one is confronted with oneself stripped of the security of a past identity. Where is one to go without ideals, without role models, without the courage to create new values ?

In the 1950's women decided to cling to the old feminine values for the same reason that Western humanity had clung to its values, namely, security, stability and comfort. The uprisings of the late 60's and 70's were successful attempts to break through old ideals and create a new, unrestrained field of possibilities. In the 80's do we face a backlash similar to that experienced in the 50's? Will we again trade the responsibility for creating our own future for the security and comfort that traditional ideals provide? Will we "overcome" the temptation of the old ideals and attempt to create ever new forms for ourselves according to a boundless energy and exuberance for life? Will we risk the security of old ideals and perhaps gain a new life? "For it does involve a risk and perhaps there is none that is greater."

Nietzsche's insight's into the functions of ideals is elucidating when we wonder whether the women's movement will go backward or forward. The moral majority, the reactionary conservatism of Phyllis Schlafly may be seen in the Nietzschean context as a return to the security of old ideals. In Nietzsche's context they are looking to erect new idols, new "shadows of God," to replace the deceased though still cherished ideals: "New struggles—After Buddha was dead, his shadow. God is dead; but given the way of men, there may still be caves for thousands of years in which his shadow will be shown—And we—we still have to vanquish his shadow too." What Nietzsche means is that we have to overcome the need for life-negating ideals and standards imposed on us from external sources. But Nietzsche's unmasking of the ideal has a constructive as well as a destructive function. It provides the opportunity for new growth, new possibilities that allow human potential to flourish. Nietzsche proclaims that "God is Dead" in order that humanity can begin to live again. In the same way, contemporary feminism has proclaimed that God, the father of patriarchy, is also dead. With the shattering of feminine ideals, women begin to live again, too—now according to new forms, standard and

possibilities no longer constrained by the feminine ideal. Shattered ideals unleash human potential and a new type of life. For women this takes the form of liberation from sex roles which previously have hindered their development :

Indeed, we philosophers and 'free spirits' feel, when we hear the news that 'the old God is dead,' as if a new dawn shone on us ; our heart overflows with gratitude, amazement, premonitions, expectation. At long last the horizon appears free to us again, even if it should not be bright ; at long last our ships may venture out again, venture out to face any danger ; all the daring of the love of knowledge is permitted again ; the sea, our sea, lies open again ; perhaps there has never yet been such an 'open sea.'

Nietzsche's new vision of humanity is strong and creative rather than weak and obedient and does not need the security and stability of old ideals to give meaning to existence. This new type of humanity is able to create its own meaning.

Nietzsche speaks of three stages in the metamorphosis of consciousness which he thinks culminate in the creative, new type of life, symbolized by the Child.

## The Metamorphosis of Consciousness

In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche traces the metamorphosis of consciousness through three stages—the Camel, the Lion and the Child. The metamorphosis of consciousness can be seen as an awakening, which leads to the new type of life Nietzsche was so fond of envisioning. Nietzsche had several metaphors to allude to his future vision of humanity—the *Übermensch*, Dionysus, the Child, free spirits, rare and precious plants in need of cultivation. Significantly, what these all have in common is a thoroughly affirmative attitude toward existence. Nietzsche has in mind an intoxicating experience, a joyous celebration of the manifold dimensions of life including joys and delights, tragedies.

and sufferings. Nietzsche calls this "Dionysian Affirmation of the world as it is without subtraction, exception or selection" *amor fati*, the love of fate. It is this acme that Nietzsche aspires to when he delineates the stages leading to it.

*The Camel.* In this stage Nietzsche emphasizes the passivity of a type of life that accepts traditional values without question. The Camel kneels down and obediently carries loads placed upon it by someone else. For Nietzsche this first stage portrays the metaphysician "the spirit that would bear much, and kneels down like a Camel wanting to be well-loaded." Like the Camel, the metaphysician bears the burden of the ideal, be it the Platonic God, the Christian God, scientific veracity, or, as in our case, femininity.

It is through a process Nietzsche calls "self-overcoming" that a Camel can become a Child, that a human being can become an *Übermensch*, that Nietzsche's imperative—"Become who you are"—can be fulfilled. But first, the Camel must become a Lion.

*The Lion.* In this stage Nietzsche conveys the forceful and rebellious posture necessary to transcend the obedience and subservience of the Camel. The Lion symbolizes strength and courage, characteristics needed to accomplish the first metamorphosis. "Break, break...these old tablets of the pious. Break the maxims of those that slander the world...Break, break this word of the softhearted and half and half."

In Nietzsche's context this stage coincides with an historical devaluation of the ideal from Plato to Christianity through Kant and positivism. What is realized at the end of this history (or one's psychological development) is that the ideal, which has been the foundation of one's entire life, is a fable, a lie, a social device to preserve a certain type of life. The result is anger, disorientation, rage, a desire for revenge. The bottom has dropped out of one's life, one is left with nothing, and the world looks meaningless: "Nihilism stands at the door." It is here that we encounter Nietzsche's "philosophizing with a hammer"



as it angrily tears down previous values. But the deconstruction also liberates the possibility of a new type of life : "Now my hammer rages cruelly against its prison. Pieces of rock rain from the stone : what is that to me ?...The beauty of the Overman came to me as a shadow." Thus, the hammer is not only a tool for destruction but also a means for building and reconstruction.

From a feminist perspective, the Lion stage represents a period in the evolution of consciousness which Nietzsche understood as both historical and psychological. This stage marks the shift away from the woman who dutifully accepts her role based on the feminine ideal, submitting to her cultural position as the second sex, Adam's leftover rib, Jill who comes tumbling after, mother earth, the hag, the spinster, the goddess, the whore, the virgin, the wife and the slave.

Although the Lion stage is a liberation from subservience and blind obedience, it has limitations. The extent of the Lion's activity is destruction. Such activity is a reactive response. The Lion destroys all ideals that threaten to enslave existence. But by being tied by resentment to the object of destruction, the Lion also destroys the ground of its own life. The Lion stage is self-destructive. Although new values are not created at this stage, the way is prepared by surpassing the feminine ideal. Resentment ties this stage of development to the past. "That time does not run backwards, that is his wrath ; 'that which was' is the name of the stone he cannot move." The Lion's spirit is stronger and more active than the Camel's, but still not creative. The Lion does not do anything to change its condition.

If the Lion stage is a transition from the unquestioning acceptance of traditional values to the recognition that one has been misled, asleep, or downright deceived, then resentment and anger are healthy reactions to a previous stage of limited awareness : "Resentment itself, if it should appear in the noble man, consummates and exhausts itself in an immediate reaction,

and therefore does not poison..." But if one's development—be it psychological, social or historical—gets stuck and lingers in resentment and anger, then this entangles the individual in the futile attempt to undo what is no longer in one's power to change. The Lion cannot forget. If resentment and anger become the final stage, one reaps the deleterious effect of prolonged stress under negative and destructive emotions; these reactions also become a quagmire justification for indolence and stagnation, an "impotence of the will to create." As such resentment and anger are not the most desirable posture for positive social change.

On the other hand, to "*be delivered from revenge*" is for Nietzsche "the bridge to the highest hope, and a rainbow after long storms." This opens the way for creative action: "To be incapable of taking one's enemies, one's accidents, even one's misdeed seriously for very long that is the sign of strong, full natures in whom there is an excess of the power to form, to mold, to recuperate and to forget...Such a man shakes off with a single shrug many vermin that eat deep into others..."

*The Child.* This last stage of metamorphosis represents transformed existence. The characteristics that Nietzsche finds outstanding in relation to the Child are innocence, forgetfulness, playfulness and joy. In a feminist context, the connection between the Child and women does not refer to dependence, immaturity and ineptitude as is often the stereotype. Rather, the Child is a metaphor for a type of existence that is able to affirm the manifold dimensions of life, even though they may be a source of difficulty and suffering.

In this stage, the vision by which one sees things is transformed, and the eye "gains the power of vision." The Child's existential affirmation of the now says "Yes!" to things as they are with joy and love which transforms everything. And one may see things that previously one had been blind to. In this stage one's scope is widened. Since the Child is completely absorbed in the present, there is no room for resentment to manifest itself. The

past and the future are forgotten in the timeless moment, Nietzsche's eternal now. The Child is strong enough to forget and begin anew.

What distinguishes the Lion in its negative aspects is its being tied to the past by resentment. The Child stage overcomes this limitation with innocence by being fully absorbed in the present, no longer influenced or distorted by past remembrances or future longings. The Child looks at things as if for the first time with a new sense of freshness and wonder. Nietzsche wants to restore "innocence to becoming, the wonder at life's unfolding, the playfulness of delighting in the world.

Playfulness and joy are central to Nietzsche's thinking. He suggests that enjoying life be a priority. He speaks about light, dancing feet overcoming the "sprit of gravity," a new "gay science," and the dancing, laughing and singing associated with Dionysus. The Child stage marks a celebration and intoxication with all that is present, which adds a brighter hue to life.

Nietzsche talks about crossing over to this dimension : "No one can build a bridge on which you must cross the river of your life, no one but you alone." This stage suggests a new responsibility. In the Camel stage, reliance on and blind obedience to an ideal gave one a direction. In the Lion stage, one was more aware, but still unable to create new values. In the Child stage, one is always creating the values by which to live, making up new rules to the game and taking delight in the process.

## Positive Directions for Social Change

Nietzsche's three stages offer a vehicle for understanding the changes that occur in consciousness when feminine ideals shatter. First, there is an unquestioning acceptance of traditional ideals. Second, there is a reaction of anger, resentment or annoyance with oneself for having believed what is now seen as erroneous. Although a necessary transition, this reaction is self-destructive and contains undesirable limitations. But it prepares the way

for going forward to the more active stage of creating new forms, new ideas, new perspectives of what is possible for women. This creative stage is rooted in an affirmation of life, despite contradictions, tragedies, injustices and inequalities. This stage suggests an affirmative posture from which social change can be advanced.

I think Nietzsche's affirmative philosophy offers an alternative to sacrificing one's life—which one does relinquish by becoming a slave to resentment and anger. We are in the process of making unprecedented changes, such as the restructuring of institutions like the family and corporations to insure equality and more flexible lifestyles for women and men. Yet we need to release ourselves from the bondage of resentment and anger by shifting our focus of energy from the injustices of the past, which cannot be changed, to the present where they can. We need to take action in the present and still delight in life. I propose that Nietzsche's Child stage, as an advanced state of consciousness, is a positive, psychological posture for making changes in the world, in one's life, and in relationships.

We may raise the questions : is it possible to be spurred on to social action if one is not reacting to past injustices and inequities ? Are not resentment and anger powerful motives for social change ? Perhaps they are powerful, and even necessary. But can we conceive of an even more powerful stance for social change, which is self-enhancing rather than self-destructive, which would be based on an affirmation of life, rather than a negation of it ?

I believe that the affirmative stance of the Child is this more powerful platform for social change. The Child affirms life despite its injustices, inequities and contradictions, and by so doing, it is free to move on and direct its positive energy into chosen avenues of endeavor. Because the Child is concentrated in the present and the priority is on the enjoyment of life, the Child, no longer divided in the past and present, can effect changes more powerfully. By affirming one's life and enjoying it, one establishes a better platform from which to do everything.

I contend that the individual can be the starting point for social change, which does not exclude or deny the power of social movements. Certainly there is enough to be done to warrant the mutual cooperation of individual and collective efforts. I believe that individual and social evolution needs to be seriously considered as a powerful vehicle for changing the world. You change the world by changing yourself.

Nietzsche's main concern is not with uncreative types of life, or with those who still pretend to carry loads they know are empty. Rather, he is concerned with the possibilities of existence in a new dimension where potentials are actualized. He refers to it as the Child, Dionysus and the *Übermensch*. Nietzsche's insights open the way to this dimension. It is left to those strong and enthusiastic enough to enter :

When then must we reach with our hopes ? Toward new philosophers ; there is no choice ; toward spirits strong and original enough to provide the stimuli for opposite valuations and to transvalue and invert 'eternal values' ; toward forerunners, toward [women and] men of the future who in the present tie the knot and constraint that forces the will of millenia upon new tracks...

## **EXISTENTIALISM AND FREEDOM OF WOMEN**

*Mrinal Kanti Bhadra*

The Existentialistic point of view about the life woman is this that woman thinks of man as the 'other' opposed to her own existence. She wants to transcend the bounds of her own existence in order to realize the ultimate end of life. Though man is the 'other' she can realize the fulness of her life with man as the centre. But she has to make efforts to win her rights in a particular social system. The social systems have through ages denied her rights and this has produced in her mind a sense of inferiority. In the contemporary age also this denial by the society is responsible for the low position to which she has been made to succumb. The sense of inferiority which has reduced woman to a subordinate position has to be removed, and this is possible only by giving her an equal status with man in all the spheres of life. Only then the real freedom of women can be achieved. Ms. Simone de Beauvoir, the Existentialist writer has established such a theory and she has collected sufficient materials in her book *The Second Sex*. She has considered the real situation of woman in historical perspectives and come

to conclude in the end, that economic emancipation alone is not sufficient for giving freedom to women.

While considering her views the first question which arises in our mind is this : Is it true that man and woman think of each other as opposed to one's own existence ? Secondly, how far is it true to say that individual can determine society according to his own wishes ? Thirdly, she has understood woman to be subjugated in all historical conditions, even in matriarchal society. How far can it be accepted to be true ? Fourthly, in her opinion the sense of inferiority of woman is not due to economic and social conditions only. Is this view acceptable ? Beauvoir has discussed many problems in her large book and of them the questions raised above have appeared to me to be the most important.

It seems that Ms. Beauvoir has obtained the main idea about her conception of woman from Sartre's analysis of "concrete relations with others" in *Being and Nothingness*. What Sartre has thought to be true of human relations in general has been understood by Beauvoir to be true of the relations between man and woman. Let us see what Sartre says. He says that in front of the 'other', I am reduced to an object and my freedom is thwarted I have an eternal conflict with the 'other' we can never cooperate with each other. To me, my freedom is infinite, my possibilities are infinite and I am always able to surpass the present condition. But the 'other' looks at me from the outside and to him, my freedom is limited. As the 'other' ; wants to reduce me to an object, I, too, intend to do the same, but cannot do it' for only a dead man can be made an object, as he has no more possibilities. Such a relation of conflict is best observed in the cases of love relations. In love, every man or woman wants that the lover or the beloved be transformed into an object. As Sartre says, "I make myself flesh of the others." This means that in love relation one wants to destroy the freedom of the other, but this destruction cannot be accomplished, for in love, besides being reduced to an object and reducing to

an object, the individual has a tendency to preserve his own life. This individuality cannot be conquered, and so there is an inner conflict in love relation. From this conflict there arises frustration and in extreme cases, it may give rise to the death of one of the partners in love relation for the attainment of emancipation by the other.

There are two sides of this theory—(1) relation between individuals and (2) application of that relation to the case of love. If we can refute the first with arguments, the second will be dismissed automatically, let us see whether an individual thinks of the other as an abstacle to his existence. We can take into account the evidence offered by the social psychologists. McDougall has established in his *Social psychology* that all the activities of human beings can be explained by a number of instincts. We may not accept his theory of instincts in full, but it may be mentioned that he has referred to two instincts which play an important role in human life. One of them is the instinct for self-preservation which expresses itself in the exercise of power and authority. The other may be called the paternal instinct with the help of which McDougall wants to explain the origin of social sense. Every animal tries to save its offsprings from dangers. Affection and tender feelings such as care and sympathy develop through these efforts of animals and man is no exception to this rule. Thus what McDougall has said as one of the pioneers of social psychology points out atleast one truth that the desire to save oneself may also be connected with a sense for the safety of others and so there need not be any conflict between the instinct for self-preservation and the sense of sympathy for others. McDougall thinks that the social sense has developed from the parental instinct. Another anthropologist Briffault in the attempt to explain the social sense says in his book *The Mothers* Just as the transferred affection of the female for the male is a derivative of maternal love, social feelings of a tender, altruistic character are extensions and transformations of the maternal instinct.



“These two thinkers have indicated the presence of social sense in the consciousness of the individual, though both have used different words, as there is difference in their conceptual framework. But they have not been able to ignore the fact that social sense is integrated with the individuals sense of self-concern. Morris Ginsberg has dealt with this problem of social sense in his book *Sociology*, but he has not derived it from any instinct. He wants to say that the social sense is original and independent. Every man wants to cooperate with another and this desire to co operate is the social sense. It is easily understood that man cannot spend his life in loneliness. He has mentioned the Freudian theory of life instinct and death instinct according to which man wants to satisfy his desires and if he encounters any obstruction from the external world, he destroy it. Freud thinks that society develops through this conflict of the individual and the world. Ginsberg does not accept this theory according to Freud, when man faces obstacle to the path of his own pleasure, he wants to destroy but wherever destruction is not possible, man accepts the authority of the society and control of the external environment for the sake of his own comfort. But such an explanation of the social sense on the basis of individual selfish desires does not seem justifiable to Ginsberg. This tendency towards destruction on the part of man as understood by Freud is discussed by Christopher Caudwell in his book *Illusion and Reality* and the remarks following the Marxist theory : ‘ The instincts unadapted by soceity are blind and are therefore unfree. The brute is not free ; the ant is the slave of its response. Man’s freedom is obtained by association which makes it possible fur him to acqire mastery over Nature...This association of itself necessity imposes certain restrictions...But all these things are not fetter on the free instincts (libido) ; they are the instruments by which instinctive man realizes his freedom”.

The discussion so far makes it clear that sociologists may have many differences, but they do not have any disagreement

about one thing and it is this that man has present in him a social consciousness from the very beginning of his social life in this world. Many think that this social sense is derived from the gregarious instinct of the animals. So the idea of Sartre and Ms. Beauvoir that each man thinks of the other as opposed to his existence is not correct. In the primitive society men would live in group, they would hunt together and they would distribute the spoils. It is possible that the stronger might have taken the larger share, but every man would have to depend upon the group for his personal safety. The zoologists and the anthropologists think that the instincts, discovered in man's life depend wholly on the environment and the society. There are similarities between man and animal in one regard that man also has some original or fundamental drives. But the surprising thing is this that the instincts in animals do not have any basic change through generations. But as many characteristics which were not found in the life of early man but were found later. Briffault thinks, that there are innate instincts in human life. There are some fundamental needs, but due to differences of environment and society these undergo modification and in their manifestation manifold differences are found from one age to another. From this it may be said that in the earliest stage of human life on the earth, there was not, perhaps, anything called individual consciousness. The first stage group consciousness or social consciousness was fundamental. Afterwards, when as a result of social evolution individual property became separated from collective property, the individual consciousness began to emerge. So we are not able to accept Sartre's theory that there exist conflict between individuals. Man lives a social life, as society is necessary for the development of individual life and due to social evolution it is possible that there may be conflicts between individuals. But conflict between individuals is not the sole truth about social life.

The existentialist theory of love is based on the relation of hostility between individuals. If we do not accept the relation of enmity between individuals, the philosophy of love which

thinks that man or woman wants to overpower each other in love cannot also be accepted. The authority in the case of man goes in favour of the existing social system and so it happens that man is the master of society. In the case of woman the attempt to establish authority goes against the social system. So, in her case the sense of inferiority seems to be inevitable. We want to say against this theory of love that it is false. If love means the attempt of one to dominate over another, then there will be no difference between love and hate. In truth, the philosophy of existentialism considers the hostility relation between individuals to be the source of all relations. As love is a human relation, the existentialists consider hostility to be true of this relation also. Sartre's theory about life is opposed to psychology and history. Moreover, this theory, as advocated in *Being and Nothingness* which influenced Ms. Beauvoir very much is not also desirable for the welfare of society. It may be said here that in his later writings such as the *Critique of Dialectical Reason* Sartre has tried to come out of this impasse by giving more emphasis on interpersonal human relations where the individuals try to form a group-in-fusion on the basis of the confrontation of their projects. But even there, Sartre is afraid that the group is always threatened with the danger of breaking up and terror, hatred, etc. play very important role in the relation between group and individuals. But *the Second Sex* was written much earlier before the publication of the *Critique* and so it is reasonable to believe that Ms. Beauvoir drew her inspiration from *Being and Nothingness*. If an individual understands his life to be absolutely separate from other individual or his neighbours, so separate that he thinks of them as his enemies, then an absolute individualism will be created and it will destroy the individual himself. In a similar way it may be said that the theory of love which upholds the domination of man over woman or woman over man has deviated from the ideal of true love. We can see from Sartre's reflections that according to him there is no fulfilment in love,

because the conflict in love relation never comes to an end. Ms. Beauvoir is a novelist. She has drawn the character of Paula in her *The Mandarins* and there she shows that though Paula has deep love for Henry, yet Henry is leaving her. The root cause of tragedy in Paula's character is not deep love, but her desire to occupy the whole of her husband's life and to deprive him of his freedom. Henry wants freedom in his love life and it was one of his first conditions that Paula should not object to the scattered love incidents which he may have now and then. Paula had agreed to it. But Henry felt that though Paula had accepted the proposal orally, she had not accepted it from her heart. Henry's freedom was being defeated against love. So, it was better to leave Paula. The cause of tragedy of the love relation is the war between the desire to dominate over another and the desire to preserve one's freedom. The other characters which have been drawn in *The Mandarins*, such as Ann, Nadin, etc express the same attitude. All this means that love ultimately leads to tragedy and the reason may be supposed to be the existentialistic outlook on love. In Sartre's story *Intimacy* we discover the perverted expression of love. An individual is so determined to save his freedom that he wants to shun the path of love and likes to taste his freedom in perversions. It is my feeling that the existentialists have misinterpreted the nature of love. Erich Fromm has said about love in his book *The Art of loving* "...Mature love is union under the condition of preserving one's integrity. One's individuality. Love is an active power in man, a power which breaks through the walls that separate man from his fellow man, which unites him with others, love makes him overcome the sense of isolation and separateness, yet it permits him to retain his integrity. In love the paradox occurs that two beings become one and yet remain two." In love the two beings become one and in it also is felt their sense of separate individuality. In cases where one wants to dominate over another, it is to be assumed that love has disappeared from there. Tender feelings, care, sympathy,

etc. in the primitive societies may be regarded as the source of love. In such a society the complex psychological state which is called love was not present. There was use of force in sexual relation, but it was true of both man and woman. But in times of sexual union the primitive man and his companion would feel for such other tender feelings. It cannot be said that there was the tendency of one to dominate over another. But the desire of man for domination in love relation is not surely due to the relations of hostility which have been enunciated by the existentialist theory of love. There has been for a long time the rule of man in society and it has produced in man the desire for authority. We can therefore say that there is no hostility between man and woman in love relation, rather in the psychology of love there is the desire for union on the level of equal dignity, but the authority of man in the social system has strengthened man's desire to establish domination in conjugal life.

As, according to Ms. Beauvoir, freedom is not recognised in love, woman has discovered perverted ways to give expression to her desire for freedom. Among those ways the important ones are homosexuality, auto-eroticism and prostitution. Ms. Beauvoir thinks that woman satisfies her desire for freedom through these different channels. But homosexuality has a physiological basis, and it cannot be ignored. The development of male and female body depends on certain 'hormones'. If these 'hormones' do not function properly, there arises imbalance. For example, the action of certain hormones may produce certain male characteristics in a female body. In those circumstances it is possible for a woman to be homosexual. But physiological state may come to acquire different characteristics due to differences of social conditions. It does not follow necessarily that a woman who has developed male characteristics due to the effect of hormone will turn into a homosexual. There may be situations where a woman may not have the opportunity for the normal development of her sexual tendencies. It may be pointed out that in the middle ages the

nuns had homosexual habits, the reason being that they lived in such an environment where the male had no access. So the explanation which has been offered by Ms. Beauvoir as the main reason of homosexuality is wrong. Freud explained homosexuality on the basis of unconscious desire, while Beauvoir wanted to explain homosexuality due to the desire for freedom. Both have, in reality, wanted, to analyse homosexuality on the basis of psychological disposition. Yet, both denied the fact that bodily condition can realize its potentiality only in a particular social situation. Paul A. Baran has said about Freud in his article on "Marxism and Psycho-analysis" "Still, while there can be no dispute about the importance of physiological factors in governing human behavior., it is indispensable to recognise the vast extent to which the economic and social order of capitalism and the process of alienation which it generates would the psychic and indeed, the physical functioning of men in the capitalist era". Freud gives more emphasis on the unconscious than on the physiological make-up, Ms. Beauvoir depends more on the conscious mind, but she has not mentioned anything about the role of social environment. In that case the criticism which is raised against Freud may also be offered against her.

About auto-eroticism and prostitution also we think that the conflict between physiological characteristics and social environment produces in the mind of the individual such tendencies. Jung divided the human personality into two categories—introversion and extroversion. But it is very difficult to say how much physiological or how much sociological is the cause of introversion in the case of a grown-up individual. The individual consciousness develops on the mutual interaction between body and the environment. It seems that the individual who is now introvert might have developed opposite tendencies, had he been kept in a situation favourable for the growth of extrovert characteristics. Therefore, the main cause of auto-eroticism is the result of conflict between physiological characteristics and social environment. It is also possible that

a man with moral health consciousness can be a victim of auto-eroticism. Freud will seek for the cause of such a condition in past experience but past experience may be totally or partially forgotten and so it is difficult to say how far it influences the present experience. Rather, it is quite likely that an event may happen in the present life which can explain easily the psychological perversion. So when an event which depends on the environment is described by Ms. Beauvoir as the transformation of the desire for freedom, the explanation appears to be unacceptable. She does not accept the economic adversity to be a sufficient reason for prostitution, for she thinks that there may be many other ways in which economic hardship can be overcome and so why the most hated path of the sale of body? Ms. Beauvoir did not consider the meaning of the word "economic cause," which may mean not only the earning of livelihood by the woman on the path of prostitution, it may also mean the entire economic system. When an innocent girl is deceived and dragged down to the profession of prostitution the persons who are leading her to that condition might have done so due to economic reasons. Someone choosing the vocation of prostitution it may be chosen willingly or unwillingly, does so ultimately on the basis of social, environmental and economic structures. It is true that in some cases the physiological characteristics being predominant, the pressure of social conditions makes one easily surrender to the choice of such a profession.

Erich Fromm says that in the capitalist society the value of everything is determined on the basis of the value of commodities. The attitude of commodity value is quite natural in the case of love. This society needs men who will feel free, but at the same time will not shrink from the activity of obeying the orders of the authority. Here man is alienated from other human beings, lonely, and is reduced to a commodity. Man has been transformed into a machine, love is the relation of selling and buying. In modern life "Love as mutual sexual satisfaction and love as 'team work' and as a haven from aloneness are the two 'normal'

forms of disintegration of love.....the society patterned pathology of love." When Ms. Beauvoir says, in love one wants to subjugate another, or when Sartre says, in love each is reduced to an object before the other and love can never reach fulfilment, are we not discovering a reflection of the ideal of love as established by the capitalistic society in the philosophy of Existentialism ?

So long we have discussed the first fundamental of the life of women as discussed by Existentialism. About the second fundamental trait regarding the sense of inferiority it has been said that woman can never succeed in fulfilling her desire for domination over man, for even if she wins in moulding the social conditions according to her wishes, there remain certain difficulties. Man is firmly established in society and so she is defeated in the struggle for power, Ms. Beauvoir has used here a philosophical word 'transcendence'. She thinks that in the case of woman this desire for 'transcendence' cannot succeed due to the social conditions and so woman considers herself to be inferior. We have to discuss here two words (1) the relation between desire and social system and (2) the exact meaning of the word 'freedom'. The two words are related, still we shall analyse them separately. Most of the Existentialist philosophers give environment a secondary importance as they think that man can transcend the environment and can mould his life according to his own wishes. Only Sartre regards man as a social animal, but even, according to him, men can regulate the social environment in accordance with his wishes. In this way, by upholding man as the all powerful being, he is also ignoring the exact role of the social environment. But we can understand with a little effort, that man is under the control of social circumstances and it is the social situation which develops his individual consciousness. In his later work *The Critique of Dialectical Reason* Sartre comes to establish that man's choice, decision, etc. are determined to a great extent by the social conditions. But even then he



would say that individual decisions cannot be reduced to social factors. There is an area of human freedom which creates, as Sartre would say, the totalisation by the human praxis. It is said that in his latest book *L'enfant de la famille* Sartre has shown how the childhood environment of Flaubert created the conditions which made him the personality he was. (I cannot say anything authoritatively about the book, as I have not yet been fortunate enough to find out a copy of the book). When man is born, he has already some natural tendencies such as hunger, thirst, sex desire, etc. But these never express themselves in their primitive character. My hunger instinct is regulated in a particular way by my environment and it is getting expressed that way. The conflict which arises between this instinct and the environment is giving hunger a particular shape. Things which are attainable in my environment such as food make me think about it in a definite way. Then, I can make some progress on the basis of this environment. But I cannot satisfy my hunger simply by my wish and by denying the environment. Man has a brain and his thought is being formed by the impressions of the objects from the external world. In explaining consciousness Pavlov says that every man has some natural reflex actions. But when a natural reflex comes in contact with another object, and there is a repetition of such contact, the reaction which forms can be called conditioned reflex. In the case of reflex action there is no consciousness, but it develops at the level of conditioned reflex. Christopher Caudwell says, 'The individual is born with certain instincts, evidenced in action (response to stimulation and change in that action (conditioned response)). That conditioning includes consciousness memory, images thought percepts and recognition and the conditioning of instincts.' He says about consciousness that it is the result of the struggle of the individual in a social environment. The development of consciousness depends on society. There are differences between individuals and such differences are felt in our consciousness. But the

division of labor which has taken place due to the social conditions is the cause of the differentiation of individual consciousness. In the primitive society the men of a particular tribe have an identical consciousness and individual consciousness develops due to social evolution. So, before saying that an individual controls the system by his wish, we have to know that social environment and material world determine human consciousness. This is, perhaps why Marx says, 'It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness.' Some of the Existentialist philosophers do not accept the importance of environment in human life ; they think that man can overcome the influence of environment, if any, by his own freedom of will. But Sartre thinks man to be a social creature, though, in his opinion also man moulds the social environment according to his own wishes. In this way, he is also trying to ignore the actual role of the social environment by making human desire all powerful. But if we try a little we can understand that the social circumstances build up man's mental structure. When man is born, he has some nature instinctive tendencies like hunger, thirst, sex-desire etc. But these are never expressed in human life in their wild manner. My hunger is moulded in a particular way by my environment and it is expressed in that way. I cannot satisfy hunger independently of the availability of the food in my environment. It cannot be satisfied simply by desire in complete ignorance of the objective world. Man's thought grows as a result of the impressions which external objects cast on his brain. In explaining consciousness Pavlov says that in some actions man responds in a series of reflex action. When stimulus of reflex action comes into contact with other objects and the contact is repeated several times, conditioned reflex appears. In the level of reflex actions there is no consciousness, but it is born in the level of conditioned reflex. Caudwell says "The individual is born with certain instincts, evidenced in action (response to

stimulus) and changed in to action (conditioned response). That conditioning includes consciousness, memory, images, thought, percepts and recognitions and the conditions of instincts." About consciousness he says that it is the product of the interaction between the life of the individual and the social environment. The structure of consciousness is dependent on society. There are differences between the consciousness of the individuals and we feel the differences in our consciousness. But the division of labour which has taken place due to the social conditions is the cause of the differences in individual consciousness. In the primitive society man's consciousness was rather undifferentiated and this shows that individual consciousness is due to social evolution. So before stating that man determines the social circumstances by his own desire, we must know that social environment and the real world determine human consciousness. In the words of Marx we see, "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness."

Engels says that older historians regarded human ideas to be the source of all changes in the world. But the question has never arisen, where do not ideas come from? The ideas of every age are determined by the social and economic conditions of the time. As he points out in his *Socialism-utopian and Scientific*, "The ultimate cause of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought not in men's brain, not in men's better insight into eternal truths and justice, but in changes in the modes of production and exchange." So it can be established without any doubt that man's consciousness, ideas or conceptions depend on his social environment. Therefore when Ms. Beauvoir says that man's desire to dominate over women has created social conditions which have produced the sense of inferiority in women's mind, we can realize that she is living in an imaginary world. First, the desire to dominate is the result of social evolution, as we know that in the primitive society man and woman had equal rights. So it is not quite clear how man

has from the very beginning a desire to dominate over women. Secondly, if it is said that woman is proving herself to be inferior in the attempt to mould society according to her own desires, it can be said in reply that desire depends upon social conditions, and not vice versa. Then, do we have to say that desire or ideas have no active role in the development of the society.

The ideas which are born in human mind are the results of social conditions. But man can make use of these ideas, after they grow in his mind, for producing changes in the society. The prevalent ideas of the society are the reflections of social activities. Man's social activity depends on the background of actual living conditions. The actual conditions are reflected in his mind and produce ideas. But, afterwards, man can build up his society more systematically with the help of these ideas. Engles says, "Every thing which sets men in motion must go through their minds. But what form it will take in the mind will depend very much upon the circumstances." The ideas which arise due to the social conditions create obstacles in the path of social progress after some time and the new ideas which appear on the basis of social needs drive the society forward. So, it can be said about the relation between desire and social conditions that the ideas born in a particular condition of society can take an active role in the society. But nothing can be built up or created simply by desire, by ignoring the conditions of social circumstances.

Thus we have seen that Ms. Beauvoir's idea that the desire to dominate is fundamental and the society is being moulded by that desire is not correct. She should have pointed out how much difference in status has been created by the desire which takes shape due to the social conditions. In this connection it may be mentioned about freedom which is the main pillar of Existentialism that freedom is also subject to objective conditions. Man has to obey certain laws and the ignorance of these laws is the absense of freedom. For example, a man may want

to fly, but he cannot do so, by ignoring the law of gravitation. His freedom cannot be realized, as it is ignoring the natural laws. But when man manufactures aeroplanes in accordance with the law of gravitation, he becomes really free. Thus the absolute freedom of which the Existentialists speaks is impossible. Freedom implies the knowledge of the laws of nature and society and the development of life in accordance with those laws. If man is ignorant of these laws, he is not free... for this reason Engels has said, "Freedom is the recognition of necessity." Plekhanov also points out that a man is free to the extent he is conscious of the laws of nature and society. Many say that genius can produce changes in the society of its free will. About this Plekhanov says, "We shall say that in the sphere of the social ideas a genius outdistances his contemporaries in the sense that he grasps earlier that they do the meaning of new social relations which are coming into existence." So when Ms. Beauvoir opposes the ideas of Freud and Adler and says that they are wrong, as they have denied individual freedom, and only her ideas are correct, as she regards the freedom of the individual to be the source of whole existence, we become surprised. The doctrine of freedom which she accepts is nothing but a set of whims and caprices. But she does not want to accept that freedom depends on objective conditions and freedom is possible by obeying the laws of the world and the society.

Ms. Beauvoir has given more importance to woman's desire to dominate, than the social conditions, but she has not been able to maintain her position consistently. In many cases she has been compelled to agree that social conditions are responsible for woman's state of inferiority. Specially when she says that woman has a desire to dominate, but she can not succeed in her attempt to determine the social conditions, she is really accepting, though implicitly, that social conditions have a principal role in human life. But she is not able to declare it boldly due to her strong convictions in the philosophy of Existentialism.

The third principal idea of Ms. Beauvoir is this that woman has been oppressed from the beginning of human civilization. We think that this opinion is false, as oppression is not possible without social conditions. In the primitive society where woman had equal rights with man, woman was not oppressed. The structure of this primitive society was matriarchal, and the society developed centering round woman. Ms. Beauvoir accepts the existence of matriarchal society, but thinks that mysteries of procreation gave woman a separate dignity in that society. Woman was given the status of goddess due to this separate status, but she was deprived of equal rights in the social situation. Another thing is this that Ms. Beauvoir has concentrated her attention on Europe, while she has been considering the position of women in history. She is aware of the ancient civilization of India, but she was not taken into account the condition of women in the different ages of Indian history. We shall try to show from instances of ancient history that woman used to enjoy equal status, until the introduction of the rights to private property.

Briffault in his *Mothers* want to say that man and woman enjoyed the equal rights in the primitive society and the equality which was present there would surprise even the modern society. Still today the primitive societies which exist in some parts of the world have equality for man and woman. Among the Eskimos there is no difference between man and women. In the primitive tribes of North America woman are completely free. Briffault has investigated into the trends of primitive society which are present in the modern world and has come to the conclusion that primitive society was matriarchal, because paternity could not be determined certainly. In this period there was the system of community marriages, and people of one tribe had to marry in another tribe. In this marriage all the men of one tribe were regarded as the husbands of all women of another tribe. The main characteristic of matriarchal society was the dignity of woman. She was the centre of

that society. The children of the same woman would live in the tribe. There was a tribal mother and after her, her daughter, her-grand daughter respectively would not the position. Women would construct houses and would not take any help from men. The word 'father' was unknown. The main ruler of the society was a woman and man would work according to her orders. There might have been a male chieftain, but he did not have much power. His main task was to protect the tribe in times of attack by some other tribe. In this society man would remain in the tribe of his wife after marriage. Even after the progress of civilization many countries had the matriarchal form of society. China has evidence of many powerful empresses. Though China is one of the finest examples of patriarchal society in the stage of civilization, yet Briffault thinks, at least till the third century, "Women could hold office and exercise administrative functions, a right which did not completely disappear until eighth century." In Japan even to-day if woman is the sole heiress of her father's property, she stays in her father's house and husband takes her name and is accepted, as the adopted son of her parents. In the Jewish society also, woman had an important position in the ancient times. In ancient Arabia woman was the owner of property and she had possession rights over many domestic animals. The husbands of women would look after the animal. Hazrat Mohammad had obtained the property, of his first wife. The princes of Egypt would be declared queen, as soon as she would be born and the person who would be king would get that honour by marrying her. In Egypt marriages were held according to the laws of matriarchal society and woman had the property rights. Woman would also get the position of priests in the country. It is found in the history of Crete civilization that woman would perform the duties of a priest in religious festivals. In sculptures man has been portrayed as slave, instrument player or wine-bearer. The society of Sparta was wholly matriarchal. In this society there was no restriction over woman's social and

sexual behaviour. Chastity was not an essential requirement for a marriagable girl. In Greece the transition from matriarchal society to patriarchal society took place through a great conflict and the evidence is found in Aeschylus's "Eumenides." There was a quarrel between Athene and Posidon over the ownership of the city of Athence. It was resolved by the voting of the citizens. Women voted for Athene and men for Posidon. As Athene won, Posidon brought the floods to punish the citizens. Then it was decided to restore his calmness by declaring that woman would be deprived of the voting right. It is known from history of Nordic Tribes that a child was named after its mother. There is evidence that Rome was also once a matriarchal society. The primitive Romans were divided into several communities and the names suggest that they were given after the names of the tribal mothers. From all these evidences Briffault has tried to prove that the primitive society was matriarchal and patriarchal society was developed afterwards. He wants to say further that as woman is oppressed in patriarchal society, many think that, perhaps, man was also oppressed in matriarchal society. But he points out that this is not true, because in patriarchal society man is the owner of social productive structures and woman is completely dependent on man economically. He says, "In primitive society, however, where private property scarcely exists, no such relationship is possible, and the conception of authority is not understood...The Primitive ascendancy of women is founded not on economic power but on the constitution of social group. The primitive human group is matriarchal for the same reason that the animal group is matriarchal."

Ms. Beauvoir thinks that woman was a prisoner of the prohibition and restrictions due to the mysteries which surrounded procreation. So, even if she were the ruler of the tribe, she did not have equal rights or high status. Briffault is of opinion that there were many prohibitions and restrictions in the primitive society to protect the mother and the child, and as in the beginning these restrictions had no connection with the



sacred, most of them were not strictly followed. He says, "But it does not follow that because women were hedged about with such vexations taboos that their position was one of degradation." In the primitive culture woman had an important role in the religious functions. In the religious activities of Dahomee many women acted as priests and they had to undergo three years' training. They were regarded as "Mother." They were held in high esteem. Among the Eskimos women can conduct the religious performance. Many 'women physicians' are found among the Indians of North America. It is known that in many primitive societies a male priest wears the robe of a woman. When a chief of the Zulu tribe prays for rain, he uses the dress of a woman. It is found in the traditions of many countries that woman's rights in religious festivals were afterwards transferred to man. There is evidence that in Australoid women had an active role in the religious functions in the primitive age. The primitive people thought that woman possessed the power of magic, besides a special capacity of performing religious duties. Briffault thinks that as woman had power in the primitive society, she was thought to be the possession of magic.

If we make a survey of Indian history we find that woman had equal rights with man in the Vedic age. Like man, woman would also go to the preceptor's house for education. But it is known that in later periods woman received education from her father. Marriage was not an essential duty. Those who would receive education till the time of marriage, would be called 'Sadyobadhu or Sadyodhaba' and those who would not marry, but would devote themselves to the pursuit of learning would be called 'Brahmavadini'. Woman would wear sacred thread like man and later she would receive the right of studying the scriptures. In marriage woman had freedom and there was no child marriage in that period. Woman had some property of her own and she would receive it as dowry at the time of marriage. It would be called 'wife's wealth' and the husband

would not have any right to that wealth. It is difficult to say whether divorce was prevalent in that age, but one 'sloke' from Kautilya shows that divorce was allowed in 'Gandharba' 'Rakshas' and 'Paisach' forms of marriage. Widow had the right to re-marry and often the brother of the dead husband would marry her. The word 'Devar' (Brother-in-law of a woman) has come, perhaps, from the word 'second husband'. If a widow would not marry, she could request a man for child according to the rules of the society. Dhritarastra and Pandu of the Mahabharata were born as result of such a rule. Like a man a woman could have many husbands, and the evidence of such marriage is found in the case of Draupadi, even after many centuries. The sanskrit word 'Duhita' means daughter and in the Vedas it is found that daughter was entrusted with the task of milking cows. The Vedic society was dependent on agriculture and milking of cows was regarded as one of the important social duties. But this dignity of woman was lost in the age of 'Smriti'. In the age of the epics there was a fall in the status of woman and during the period of 'Smriti' study of the vedas became prohibited for woman. As wearing of sacred threads was no longer allowed, woman remained no longer eligible for the study of the Vedas. At that time the study of the Vedas became prohibited for the sudras and woman being deprived of the right to that study was downgraded to the level of the sudra. It is found in the words of Samkaracharya that reason for the inferior status of sudras and woman is that both were not allowed to study the Vedas. In the Gita also such a reference is found. The no. 32 'sloka' of the 9th. Canto says, "Main hi partha byapasritya jehapi suh papayogayah. Striah Vaisya-statha Sudrastehapi. Janti param gatim." In this age the child marriage was introduced for girls and women's freedom was put in chains by the strict laws of Manu. The famous sloka of Manu 'Na Stri Swatantryam' can be remembered in this context. No scholar in the period of the Smriti is known to have shown any liberal attitude to women. In that age of narrow

mindedness only the 'Brihat-Samhita' of Varaha-Mihira says", The Shastras declare that both husband and wife are equally sinful if they prove faithless to the marriage vow ; men care very little for the Shastras (while women do) ; there women are superior to men." A question may arise here, woman has held in high honour in the Vedic society—was such society matriarchal ? Briffault says, "The society depicted in the Vedas is clearly not in a primitive condition : it appears to be essentially patriarchal, as might be expected of a pastoral society ; it is marked by private ownership of cattles and horses, by well defined aristocratic classes of warriors and priests and a highly developed religious cult and literature." If it is so, how can we explain the high status of women in the society. Briffault gives the reply, "It would appear that some of these aryan tribes had retained a considerable matriarchal organisation. In ancient Indian society there are several indications of the previous existence of matriarchy." Perhaps, woman had a high position due to the presence of such social structures.

The historical evidence presented by Ms. Beauvoir contains another mistake. Eileen Power in her *The legacy of the Middle Ages* shows that the status of women, though deteriorated in one aspect, increased in another. Woman had to lose her prestige due to the rigid principles of Christianity. She had very limited power due to the consolidation of private property ownership. Still on many occasions when the feudal lord would go to war, his wife would look after the estate, would supervise the work of the agriculture and would also employ the slaves for different activities. In this connection the counsels given by a feudal lord to his wife may be mentioned. The wife must be aware of the art of keeping herself beautiful and she must have a knowledge of the items of the life of luxury. She would have to acquire the qualities of modesty and chastity and at the same time she must have training in the administration of the estate. There were many tradeswomen in that society who would supervise the business of the husband, and sometimes they would build

up a trade. The book makes this comment about a woman author of the period. It says, "Christine de Pisan was skilled in the courtly conventions, for she made her living and supported her children by her pen." It is know about a woman physician that she had to enter into rivalry with men physicians. When the competition reached an extreme stage, "Jacoba Felicia in 1322 being about thirty years of age was prosecuted by the medical faculty of Paris." In this age the dignity of the Virgin Mary was established and the status of women gained a position of honour in religion. Another aspect of the honour of women in this age was the respect which was shown to the ladies of the noble families by the knights. For the first time romance was written in literature and woman was given full honour in love, though she was denied it in conjugal life. There may be a connection between the honour of Mary in religion and the honour shown to her in literature. For this reason Gibbon has said. "The cult of the lady was mundane counterpart of the cult of the virgin and it was the invention of the mediaval aristocracy. The knight was the champion of God and the ladies—I blush to unite such discordant terms". We do not think that woman had any freedom in the real sense of the term in the middle ages. Still in many cases she had the honour of working as the representative of man—the status of woman in love and the reverence to the Mother Mary—these are historical truth. Ms. Beauvoir has not mentioned them. But these facts reveal at least one truth that woman had been able to acquire the rights of freedom in those cases, where she had earned economic freedom. Engles has also stated that in the Middle ages free love born outside marriage due to the rigid rules of marriage,. The regulations of marriage were the strictest in that age and so according to the laws of dialectic another ideal of true love was set up in the relation between the lover and the beloved. The honour of the Mother Mary can be explained as another reflection.

In the last part of the essay Ms. Beauvoir's fourth principle

may be divided into two sections and it can be shown that economic condition is mainly responsible for woman's inferior position in society and that economic freedom will be able to restore her freedom.

Ms. Beauvoir thinks that economic condition is not important. But we find that women used to take part in production of food in the primitive communist society. They had equal rights due to this situation. When agriculture first appeared in that society, women would look after it. Men would go out for hunting, but would not be able to procure sufficient food. So food had to be increased by agriculture women were pioneers in this activity. Briffault says, "Women hunted equally with men and fishing was done more commonly by women than men." One of the main difficulties for going to hunting was the nurture of children. So gradually a division of labour developed. Women remained engaged in domestic activities and agriculture. Men would go away to hunting.

There did not seem to be any physical deficiency behind this division of labour, as in that age woman would go to hunting along with man. She would also take part in battle. It can be said for example that even at present women of many primitive tribes participate in war among the tribes. Briffault has also shown that women would come forward for activities relating to art, house-building, etc. From this it can be said that woman's status had not suffered as long as she had taken an active part in production. Engles says, "In the old communistic household, which embraced numerous couples and their children the administration of the household entrusted to the woman was just as much a public, socially necessary industry as the providing, of food by men." Production conditions improved and due to the improvement of agriculture the problem of food was solved to a great extent and this is a major event in the history of society. Briffault wants to say that the position of equality between man and woman underwent a change on account of the improvement of agriculture. So long man

had no right to property, society was matriarchal and daughter did not have to leave the tribe of the mother after marriage. Prior to the stage of agriculture there was the stage of domesticating animals. The animals would be procured by the hunters and so their right on animals came to be established. The patriarchal society had its foundation on the basis of this property. In the societies where hunting was not prevalent, woman had her right to property for a long time, for agriculture was conducted in the beginning by the matriarchal society. Due to the improvement of agriculture man's right to property increased and the slavery of woman started. As production of food increased, every body did not have to work and so woman began to be confined at home for a greater time. It is difficult to say how woman's equal rights came to disappear, but agriculture being the main factor of production, man did not have to go out for hunting. As the conditions of agriculture improved, both man and woman did not have to work equally. Woman came to be deprived of the rights of production gradually. There was surplus production and it gave rise to private property. Woman did not any longer have any right to property. Briffault says in this connection, "Women became economically unproductive and dependent." As man's right to property was established, in many societies monogamy came to be introduced in the place of polygamy. But this principle of monogamy was not followed strictly in the case of man. The main aim of this principle was to keep woman under the suppression of man, so that she would not be the object of enjoyment by any man, other than her husband. But for the husband it would not be a crime, if he had sexual relations with women other than his wife. Monogamy proclaimed the ideal of chastity for women, but no such ideal was insisted on in the case of men. It was the common rule of the time and in the words of Demosthenes, "We have hetaira for our delight, concubines for the daily needs of our bodies, wines in order that we may get legitimate children and faithful housekeepers." The origin of

private property established monogamy, as a result of which the primitive communistic society was abolished, the patriarchal society came to an end and private property along with the patriarchal form of society into existence witnessed the sad disappearance of the dignity of woman. Thus, we have found that right in production and economic independence in the primitive society had given woman an equal status. If woman is to be enthroned in that seat of glory again, she would have to be given economic independence. This attempt is now being carried on in all countries of the world. But a society which is based on private property cannot give women complete emancipation. So, if woman is to be given equal rights and complete economic independence, she should be given equal rights in production in a socialistic society.

Mr. Beauvoir had visited China in 1955 which had just commenced the building up of the socialistic form of society. She wrote down her experiences in the book *The Long March*. She said that the communist China has passed a new marriage act in 1950 and the act "asserts the individuals freedom within the context of the family, it affirms the complete equality of sexes." Ms. Beauvoir wrote about the act. "Thus in contrast of Chiang's 1931 code the marriage act plainly and frankly establishes a conjugal family based upon the equality of man and wife and their equal rights of self-determination." She had visited different families in China, interviewed many couples and talked with the young communists. She concluded on the basis of her personal experiences, "clearly economic independence and freedom go hand in hand. One of the purposes behind the emancipation campaign is to make the working potential of women available to the country. We may ask her : Is not this statement going against her own idea in *The Second Sex* that economic independence cannot bring freedom to women ?

We have tried to show in this essay that we are in full agreement with Mr. Beauvoir's ideal of woman's liberation, We think that mankind can not achieve the goal of progress if

women remain deprived of equal rights and opprtunities. But the theory on which Ms. Beauvoir has based the inferior status of women is mistaken. The idea that woman has been condemned to a status of inferiority due to her defeat in the competitive struggle with man has no psychological and historical basis. Her idea that economic situation has not caused inferiority in the condition of women is also incorrect. The high status which was available to women in the primitive society was abolished in the patriarchal society which had its foundation in the development of private property. This is why Engles said, "Situation changed with the patriarchal family and even more with the monogamian individual famlly. The administration of the household lost its public character. It is no longer concern of society. It became a private service. The wife becomes the first domestic servant pushed out of participation in social production". Ms. Beauvoir herself has agreed that economic independence has advanced the cause of woman emancipation to a great degree. Her travels in new China have convinced her that economic freedom established woman firmly in her positon in society. So we can say that inequality between man and woman is mainly economic. If economic distinctions between the sexes are removed, woman will obtain her equal rights with man and she will have complete freedom. In the words of Lenin, "A Joint economic system is essential for total freedom and equality of woman. Woman will have to take part in the social production." The progress of the Soviet Union in realizing the emancipation of woman is a living testimony to the ideal for which Lenin had fought. It is hoped that the ideal society based on perfect equality between man and woman which has already started in the socialist countries will come into existence one day in the near future.



## **EMERGENCE OF NEW WOMAN I**

### **A PROBLEM OF VALUES**

*Laxmi Paroshuram*

A woman's place in man's world had always been assigned to her by man, and the values by which she should live and guide her conduct in her various roles as daughter, wife and mother determined for her by social norms based on male superiority. A woman in man's world often did not arrive at the level of intellectual maturity required to question these assigned roles and their value system. In rare cases where she acquired such maturity she could hardly make an impact on prevailing norms either because her questions never led to a viable alternate system or because hers was too lone a voice easier to be dismissed as deviant than listened to with any serious attention.

In all attempts at a definition of woman and her qualities man is the norm against which she has been measured. "The female is a female by virtue of a certain lack of qualities," wrote Aristotle and this 'lack' is always measured in terms of the qualities possessed by man. St. Thomas pronounced woman to be an 'imperfect man' and because of her imperfection a woman had always to be guided by the superior wisdom of man. By virtue of this superior wisdom, man put himself in the subjective role in all his relationship with the other sex which was given only the status of an object to be interpreted

from masculine angle. Simon de Beauvoir writes, "The terms masculine and feminine are used symmetrically only as a matter of form...In actuality the relation of the two sexes is not quite like that of two electrical poles, for man represents both the positive and the neutral as is indicated by the common use of 'man' to designate human beings in general, whereas woman represents only the negative defined by limiting criteria, without reciprocity." The last phrase used here 'without reciprocity' is very significant since it clearly denotes that lack of activity, independence, and interaction to which women have fallen in the roles assigned to them by man and this social needs.

The general code of values that women are usually associated with arises from their condition of subordination and powerlessness. Man generally cherishes the qualities of obedience and self-sacrifice in a woman and these qualities are safely nurtured in the sense of passivity, compliancy and irrationality which women accept as part of their powerlessness. So too are qualities like piety, lack of materiality and other-worldliness generally attributed to women. By the same logic, women are to avoid aggressiveness, self-assertion and competition since these are the most inconvenient attitudes to have under a state of subordination. In this general sense of feminine attributes and values arising from man's superior position there was no room for allowing any importance to women's possible intellectual abilities. Biologists and psychologists vied with one another to theorize on physical and psychological handicaps inherent in woman's condition and often they were convinced of the close correspondence between physical and mental attributes. "Anatomy is Destiny," wrote Freud, in the late nineteenth century. Thus even when Freud in a way recognised women's difference from the norms constituted by man, he could not understand the claims of women for developing an approach of their own apart from the masculine angle. In fact, Freud even opposed John Stuart Mill's proposals for the education of young women on the ground that education was teaching systems of aggression which, is given to women would destroy men's concept of women's delicacy.

Eversince that first meeting of women held at Seneca Falls in 1848 so much has happened the world over to increase the awareness of women both of themselves and the world. When a few women managed to come together to exchange their views and feelings regarding their feminine condition the first lines, of communication were laid and a sense of community brought into being. This sense of community and communication is almost the first principle in bringing forth a sense of awakening, and the women who were often handicapped with a sense of isolation and unreality in their separate homes needed opportunities for communicating and sharing their lot with others before they could even think of claiming any of their human rights.

Women might have received the first intimations of their awakening also in the light of the concepts of equalitarianism and class war that the proletarian movement brought to light. When the working classes asserted their rights against the bourgeois society, women who often had no better status then that of workers in their homes were prone to feel a sense of identity with the oppressed classes. Again, the struggle for equal rights on the part of the Blacks in America produced a sympathetic vibration among the woman. Women's groups in the eighteenth. century engaged themselves in voluntary service in the cause of the poor and the downtrodden and this experience brought them a wealth of insights into their own condition. The general trend of thinking during the era of Enlightenment in the eighteenth. century was prone to a sense of reason and justice and a number of men themselves advised and encouraged women to pursue definite goals for the welfare of society.

It was in the cause of suffrage that women made their first strike for equality. The idea of winning the right to vote was perhaps more appealing to them in term of equal damocratic right than for gaining sizable political power. The women put up a stiff fight for suffrage almost on par with masculine levels of competence and aggressiveness. However, when the vote was finally won, women could make no effective political use of the power

it conferred on them. On the home front the vote made little difference in women's status, and there could be no political organisation among women who lived in their separate homes preoccupied with the anxieties of their various non-political roles. In speaking of the ultimate gains of the suffrage movement, Emily Newell Blair has said, "I know of no woman today who has any influence or political power because she is a woman. I know of no woman who has a following of other women. I know of no politician who is afraid of the woman vote on any question under the sun" and we may take it as a fairly correct observation.

The wide acceptance of the social myth that women's place was in the home hindered the arrival of any basic changes in women's place in man's world. Women continued to be the ministering angles at home and followed the general code of social imperatives even when some of them had an active inner life inconsistent with the limits of their roles within the family. Since marriage was the only vocation permitted to women there was no question of their trying to evade these roles and work out the possibility of a different status in the world. As a result, we come across numerous instances of women for whom the old values cease to have any meaning while there is yet to possibility for an alternative code. As a result, marriages that were once entered into as opportunities for fulfillment often became "dubious ventures with a dull association of material and social interests." and women began to brood on their condition. In our own time, women's place in man's world has been further rationalised and revolutionised. Although there have been many significant changes in marriage and family norms, increasing numbers of women today are entering into various professions and service even when they are married. Unlike the suffrage which placed uncertain political power in the hands of women tied to their homes opportunities for education and employment outside their home have brought for women economic and various other benefits which can diminish their sense of

powerlessness. However, the emergence of such a 'new woman' today with a possibility for independence and power, and the subsequent shift in her code of values from that of powerlessness to one of challenge and uncertain power are not to be attributed solely to economic factors ; several complex psychological and sociological factors are involved in the situation that lies ahead of women today.

Our main problem is to decide whether the so-called 'new woman' of the modern world with increased educational and employment opportunities has really been able to evolve a new set of values based on her own feminine angle of vision. For this we have, first of all, to assume that increased opportunities for employment and education available today will necessarily equip the women to take a new look at the world and themselves. In several cases that we come across, education has not quite achieved this purpose and employment has often been vouchsafed only to those that have agreed to become mere cogs in the wheel. Besides, in certain situations in poor countries the women have no choice with regard to the work that they have to take up and so no conscious or mature approach can be expected from them. However, we may say that women's work outside their homes has significantly posed a threat to the old myth that women's place was in the home, and this myth, as we know, has so far stood in the way of women's exposure to and understanding of the real world. Education and employment have brought women into the open where they can observe themselves in relation to others and measure their own maturity and experience. Such an exposure is indeed essential for the process of individuation on the psychological plane which is basic to all value formation.

Protest, anger and a sense of challenge against the old values such as patience, sacrifice, endurance, spirituality and so on are often associated with the new awareness developing among women. In many cases, particularly in the West, family as an institution has been adversely affected due to the erosion of such

values. The sense of protest and anger women have felt against unfair treatment meted out to them so far has turned many of them to become rebels against social practices. Many books have been filled with their complaints and grievances, and as Patricia Meyer Spacks has pointed out in her well-known book on *Female Imagination*, anger has acted as a source of creative energy in many books by women and enabled them to criticise as well as escape from masculine norms. But as Virginia Woolf has pointed out as early as in 1929 anger and protest has not really enabled women to formulate a truly feminine angle and feminine style...A sense of protest against dominant values could enable women only to form a dissident subculture which has to thrive only on tension and conflict. It may not enable them to undergo a process of maturation and individuation in terms of the real world and its demands.

Women could of course develop further from this stage of angry protests and enter men's world as equal competitors. This means that women will not any longer claim a distinctive view of life or style of functioning. Success, aggressiveness, independence, freedom, material gains and so on will be the only criteria to live by and whether these will be compatible with certain primal and instinctive attributes of women remain to be seen. There will be a total reversal of the usual roles such as homemakers, mothers and wives given to women and there would be a demand on men to share all the roles not only equally, but also competitively. Such a move is being advocated by feminists, but its success remains, still conjectural, largely because deliberate attempts to reverse roles and emotional bonds can not work in many cases without adverse effects. The explorations into feminine consciousness that we find in the books of many women writers leave us in doubt as to the ultimate possibility of women being able to achieve total freedom from the limitations of femininity. 'The distinguished 'emancipated' women who have written about themselves in our century often reveal the extraordinary difficulties of feminine freedom'" writes Patricia Meyer

Spacks. As against this search for the concomitants of freedom in the external world some writers have shown their heroines achieving real inner freedom by accepting the limitation of their femininity and transcending them through imagination. "There are those who can rise about life, transform it, free themselves, and for these the revolution is not necessary." writes Anais Nin.

Ultimately of course no problem in values can be solved by social sanctions. As long as women remained unconscious of their true selves, social norms could dictate their mode of life and code of values, but an awakened feminine consciousness will go a long way in discovering itself and creating the conditions for such discovery.

## THE PARADOXES OF WOMANHOOD

*Pradip Kumar Sengupta*

The study of a woman with reference to case history appears to be misleading, since there always remains the possibility of contrary cases. The present paper is an attempt to study the basic psychological truth of a woman and her attitude towards life and society.

The development and growth of a society depend upon two major aspects, namely, the economic system and the family structure. In so far as the family structure is concerned, the role of a woman is undeniably the most important simply because on the one hand the virtues of a woman can make a good family, a happy home and on the other hand the vices of a woman are the sole factors for any family, wreck. In contrast, neither the virtues nor the vices of a man play any significant role in the family situation. In view of a good and stable society, the role of a woman should be carefully studied, in so far as a good family situation can to a certain extent overcome the general economic crisis which may otherwise hinder, the normal growth of a society. Corresponding to the changes in the family situation, the economic motives and plannings also undergo a considerable change. This between the two 'family' is presumably more important than 'economics' in as much as the latter can be said to be determined by the



former. As a matter of fact any economic policy is ultimately meant for the benefit of the family vis-a-vis the society. If the result of the economic policy is unacceptable in the family system prevalent in a society, it may be rejected as futile. Too much of economic prosperity may ruin a family as too much of economic lapses do the same. It is historically granted that the family in an industrially advanced society is different in structure and outlook from that in an agriculturally dominated society. Whatever way the relationship may be viewed, the socio-economic needs of the family have to be regarded as the sole concern. And it is here that a study of the role of women, her psychology, her social outlook and her service to the economic needs of the society is of any merit.

The role of a woman can be studied from her personal point of view as well as from the point of view of her relation with man. From this second point of view which is fundamental arise several other aspects the national or international role of a woman.

A woman is basically impulsive and remains an impulsive woman throughout her life in the sense that she can never go beyond the limits of what may be called the uniquely feminine psychology; whether a girl or a wife or mother or a step mother or even a grandmother she remains within the walls of her feminine instinct and impulses to which she succumbs almost unconsciously. Indeed, the root of female psychology can be traced to the biological needs and the physiological structure of the female body. All her will, her conduct, her virtues and vices can be ascribed to her bodily equipment which not merely deceives man but also acts as a means of self-protection and self-survival. "Nature has accordingly armed the women," says Schopenhauer, "like every other creation of hers, with the weapons and instruments which she requires for the assurance of her subsistence, and at the same time she requires it, a course in which she has proceeded with her usual economy."

It would be rather an unhappy extreme attitude if we say with

Schopenhauer that a woman is nothing more than a "grown-up child." Of course, a woman is characteristically more frivolous than a man, but to go to the extreme of ascribing childishness in all her matter would be too much. The dignified aspect of the so-called feminine frivolity can be treated as the outcome of the fundamental traits of her psychology namely, the feeling of sympathy, affection ; self surrendering love, element of sacrifice, unrewarded service to others and so on. To these psychological traits a man with his masculine vigour is almost utterly blunt and sometimes spares no pain to take up the path of cruelty which again in the feminine psychology is almost foreign, betraying the very nature of womanhood. In short, most of the nobler sentiments and values are ascribed to woman and are unquestionably the superior gifts which a woman applies as a matter of her birth right.

To the dark side of feminine psychology belong lack of determination, and firmness and simultaneously quickness of decision etc. which, however, may be said to follow invariably from the nobler sentiments. An affectionate woman is very rarely firm.

Paradoxically enough, there are other factors constituting the feminine psychology which not merely do not follow from the nobler sentiments rather run contrary to them. One of these factors is the characteristic jealousy of woman regarding other woman. When any two women meet each other for the first time, it is universally the case that they meet with a strong and acute eye of adverse criticism. Between men there may be indifference ; but between women there is "enimty even by nature." Again, in their treatment with the subordinates whether at home or outside (office or any social organisation) a woman is always conscious that she is superior and treats other with an attitude of unbearable supremacy which often leads to unhappy consequences for man to settle. The paradoxical and rather unfortunate aspect of female psychology is that a woman always exaggerates class distinction on any front. How this can be reconciled with her characteristic nobler virtues remains always a mystery.

Whether good or bad, the whole feminine psychology seems to be dominated by a single interest—that of self-satisfaction (not always mere selfishness) of winning over by applying some means noble or otherwise through which she can have the feeling of mastery over the present situation. However, all the elements of feminine psychology may be regarded as the 'actuating force' of her bodily equipment. To this we shall come later on.

It may not be denied if one says that female psychology is predominantly emotional. In its intellectual aspect, the contribution is very little. But in small matters it is not always unadvisable to take a woman into confidence, to seek her counsel because a woman being engrossed within 'the present' has always a certain tendency towards objectivity, a capacity to look through the gross, minor details of a situation, to intuitively grasp the bearing of the situation on her present life and life of those with whom she has a personal relation. In this respect a woman is decidedly far superior to man who with his other serious preoccupations usually overlooks the minor but otherwise important details of situation.

The feminine psychology apart, the female anatomical structure, the biological process of female response and release would show that nature has not created woman for great intellectual and manual achievements. The dignity of a woman consists in her suffering and sacrifice, in the joy of her pain of child birth the cares and anxieties for the child, her deep concern for, making a happy home and her unflinching patience to the neglect of her personal comforts. It is the intrinsic dignity of the woman which makes her life flow quietly without being essentially more happy.

It is perhaps in woman that we can see how biology determines the psychology. Whether the relatively complicated biological process is responsible for the unfathomable depth and the resultant mysterious dimension of feminine psychology, is for the sociologist or the anthropologist to decide. An animal that has a horn will have an unconscious but concomitant desire to

use it. In like manner, the bodily equipment and the correlation of her bodily parts, their function and to whatever use they may be put constitute the concomitant but unconscious motive of the woman in all affairs of her life. Every woman should marry at least for their unconscious motive of motherhood. "Children are the object of her eternally unconscious gratitude, because they are the product of her healthy functioning, the instruments on which she has played off the whole gamut of her sensibilities and sensations"

The essentials of feminine psychology constitute the essential of a woman's whole life and being. The elaborate and extensive bodily equipment meant for the multiplication of life plays role so much vital that the woman herself is not always aware of it. Not merely the feminine instinct and impulse, even the will of a woman is conditioned by and resides in this bodily prerogative which works at once as the self-preservative caution signal as well as the reproductive satisfaction. Everything good or bad in a woman can be explained to some extent by referring to the unconsciousness of the true, feminine forces actuating and inspiring her from within.

The feminine psychology is unique because it is mysterious ; it is mysterious because no one can calculate the tendency and output of feminine impulses which originate from and also terminate in the intrinsic feeling of self-satisfaction which always changes according to the circumstances. Adaptability to rival circumstances is one of the cardinal virtues that nature has endowed woman with. Neither the impulse nor the self-satisfaction is amenable to any calculation or theorisation. Unpredictability is what constitutes womanhood. No one knows how a woman would react to the situation today, even though one knows how she reacted to the same situation just the other day. If the change of circumstances occurs too frequently a man surrenders more readily than a woman. By virtue of her mysterious faculty of self-adjustment (self-satisfaction here also) a woman also tackles the situation much more efficiently than a

man, since what works in the background is the intrinsic tendency of her mastery over the situation. In this respect, a woman is much more diplomatic than a man although in serious matters in greater perspective involving a large number of persons with wider social or economic impact, the feminine diplomacy fails miserably. All these considerations would substantiate that in minor affairs, particularly affairs relating to the family, the cleverness of a woman (if not intelligence) is more paying. This cleverness may sometimes amount to treachery or deception which is her intrinsic weapon but is quite pardonable since the motive is good, namely, the safeguard of the family interest.

If a woman is made to be all virtuous, honest, important, objective and intellectually alert, what best we can achieve is the annihilation of the charm of human life and civilisation. If you destroy the woman's interest in petty powers, her vanity and her sensuality, you thereby betray yourself by undermining the very instincts that Nature has implanted in woman exclusively for her to secure the survival of the species at all costs and in the face of any danger that may come in the way where man is only a helpless spectator.

## II

In discussing the role of a woman in relation to man two concepts appear to be of fundamental importance 'love' and 'marriage', the happy consequence of which is happy family and good education of the children, the unhappy consequence of which, on the other hand, is 'divorce' and 'prostitution'. The role of a woman in relation to man is particularly significant in so far as it has a strong impact both upon the family and upon the society as a whole.

To begin with one can maintain that minor conflicts between man and woman in a family are always desirable, because they increases the power of adjustment, adaptation and tolerance which are some of the major social values. Moreover, such conflicts strengthen, rather than weaken mutual admiration and

sympathy resulting in a new charm in the family life which otherwise might have been dull and insipid.

Love arises out of mutual sympathy and admiration for the opposite sex. It is not something which can be mechanically injected into persons. The distinction between pre-marital love and post-marital love has no convincing force. A couple may continue to love each other deeply who were not known to each other before marriage and a marriage consequent upon previous love may break any moment. In the sphere of love, the role of a woman is much greater and always more effective than that of a man, inasmuch as a woman is born to love, to conquer man. For the woman, love is conquest ; for man, it is just a quest. In matters of love a man gets more easily frustrated than a woman, a woman's love is her whole life whereas a man's love is just a part of his life. A woman deceives a man whom she loves only to conquer him finally. A man loves a woman and is likely to be deceived because he does not usually proceed with the fullness of his life. A woman loves and wants to be loved with the entire wealth of life. The woman's power of self-adjustment enables her to overcome all frustrations and in this respect the man fails. Whether pre-marital or post-marital, whether in India or abroad love has always this unique, non-linear relation between man and woman. Again, it is with the woman that the responsibility lies to raise the man whom she loves to the richness of his life to raise his abiding humanism to the fused in love. A woman can, but a man cannot, rather is not capable of discharging this responsibility successfully.

Love, children and work are, according to Russell, the three major sources of fertilising contact between the individual and the rest of the world and of these three love is chronologically the first. Love has its own charm, its own ideals and it can intrinsic moral standards. It is something much above the mere attraction for sexual relationship. With woman it is her whole life ; with man it is usually one of the affective means of

escape from the loneliness which clouds the greater part of his occupations.

Love breaks the false walls of the ego, and produces a new world of harmony where man and woman become two-in-one. Nature has created human beings with the characteristic inability to live alone. A woman who has never known the blessings of love has missed the best of what life could give her. Unconsciously or consciously much a disappointment includes her to every or cruelty or other kinds of crime which her body permits. Without love, a woman cannot attain her full stature and cannot feel towards the society with the requisite warmth and generosity without which her social outlook and activities are very likely to be harmful. A woman who is disappointed as a lover is more dangerous to the society than a tigress because, as we have already said, love involves the whole life and being of a woman.

Love is, therefore, a *must* for the woman and marriage is *essential* for the manifestation of womanhood into motherhood particularly for the benefit of the society of which family is just a miniature. But love is "an anarchic force" which should not be left free. If the question of children does not come in, then of course there may not be any serious danger in free love. There should be a wisely drawn ethics for the maintenance of the society within the frame-work of which love should be allowed to manifest itself in all its richer dimensions, as much and as wide as possible. It is good for the children if any see that their parents love with other with all respect and admiration. A good family is an index of a good society. In this context every woman should love and be loved by man with the richness of life and not merely with the richness of the body.

Marriage means, according to Schopenhauer, "to have one's rights and, to double one's duties." If this is true at all, it is true more as regards woman than as regards man. If the marriage laws concerned equal rights to women with man, then Schopenhauer would claim that a woman should have been endowed with a male reason. But this is rather a wrong

approach, since a woman with male reason would cases to have all charm and beauty of womanhood. The charm of a woman consists in her relatively weak intellect and in her stronger emotions, as the beauty of a feminine figure consists not in its masculine Vigour but rather in the feminine tenderness. The equality of rights must be granted, but only in respective fields. What is noteworthy is that a woman should be given due privilege of what she is capable of whether at home or outside. Not that a woman should be confined to kitchen, nor that a woman should be treated as a machine for producing children. Again, it should not be the case that a woman should be totally indifferent to her domestic needs and duties. Marriage should not be overruled by the idea of possessiveness. It is in this sense that equality of rights is most needed in marriage. Again, social rules should not be such as to make instinctive happiness in marriage impossible or difficult. Prolonged virginity is extraordinarily harmful to women as repeated motherhood, once a year, is equally harmful. Equality in marriage means a denial of policemenhip on either side. Every woman should be considered with due recognition of her domestic and social potentials.

Teachers of sexual morality would prefer to condemn such acts which would do harm to society. But Russell argues that most of the church fathers as teachers of morals condemn acts which do no harm and condemn acts which do great harm.

"They all condemn sexual relations between unmarried people who are fond of each other but not yet sure that they wish to live together all their lives. Most of them condemn birth control. None of them condemns the brutality of a husband who causes his wife to die of too frequent pregnancies. I know a fashionable clergyman whose wife had nine children in nine years. The doctors told him that if she had another she would die. Next year she had another and died. No one condemned him ; he retained his benefice and married again. So long as clergyman continue to condone cruelty and condemn innocent



pleasure, they can only do harm as guardians of the morals of the young."

Man and woman should know that nothing can justify their sexual relation unless there is mutual consent and inclination accompanied by mutual respect and sympathy. Not that every case of sexual relation should be converted into marriage. But once man and woman enter into marriage, the tendency towards extra-marital sex relation on either side should not be encouraged, because it may ultimately result in divorce which is generally undesirable. If there is no possibility of having sex relation with a woman other than one's wife, most men will create and enjoy the best of their marriage. The same is true with women.

It is here that we feel the merits of some fixed social and moral rules of a wiser ethics preventing man and women to enjoy extra-marital sexual happiness. In order to ensure domestic peace and a healthy family outlook which is inevitably reflected in society, it is obligatory that neither the man nor the woman should go beyond the customarily accepted standard of decent sexual behaviour whatever this may be, for the sake of themselves or for the sake of the children. Extra-marital sex relation in the name of cultural progress should be punished by criminal law ; in like manner too much of masculine insistence on repeated fatherhood at the cost of the health or the very life of a woman is punishable. Extra-marital love which does not involve the question of sex is not so harmful as one involving sex is.

Insanity, cruelty, impotence or venereal disease are the grounds upon which divorce is necessary ; but at the same time attention should be paid in reforming the divorced husband or the wife to enable him or her to remarry. This, however, is the subject of Penal Reform. Every divorce, if remains unmarried, is likely to have recourse to social crimes to compensate his or her frustration. In order to protect society, the special measure has to be adopted to enable his or her to lead a normal, happy

life. Divorce is not a solution of troubles in marriage. The man and the woman should try their best to respect each other's values. For the sake of children, a marriage should indeed be stable but divorce is necessary when the marriage itself has harmful results upon the children or where it ends in a childless marriage. You can speak in favour of recommending extra-marital sex relation on either side ; but this may be accepted if and only if each of the partners has reached the height of conjugal happiness to the extent that each can afford to put it aside for the sake of new love, of course with consent from either side. Neither in marriage nor in divorce should there be any pressure of any kind. Whether or not the issue of children is involved, a man and a woman should be mutually treated as having an independent frame of values worthy of being admired.

The most striking feature of the paradoxical nature of womanhood is 'prostitution' which a woman takes up as a profession. Originally a prostitute was meant for the service dedicated to God and a woman is entrusted with the responsibility of rendering all kinds of assistance to man who came for the worship of God. In such a context, a prostitute was treated with honour.

But in course of time, along with the decline and fall of such religion practices, the women being deprived of all other occupations and possibly of any recognition at home from a community by themselves meant mainly to satisfy the masculine needs whenever required. Naturally men take this opportunity and on the basis of the denial of any social recognition of these unfortunate women exploit them to any length. Criminals are often said to receive protection, support and assistance from prostitutes. Thus prostitution becomes the source of a major social evil and the women are generally held responsible for such evil which, in other words, is considered as the most fundamental vice or immorality of women. It is highly controversial whether women entering into the profession or willingly accept it. Whatever be the outcome of this controversy, it

it cannot be denied that a prostitute cannot claim moral goodness. But it cannot equally be denied that such an immoral profession does some thing for the welfare of the society in so far as the prostitutes serve good companionship to the sailors, to the wretched husbands, to persons who are habitually drunkard and in this way closes the way to greater social evils.

One point is worth mentioning that in curing the psychological damage of man, a prostitute is prone to a psychological damage to her own womanhood. Considered in this angle, a prostitute is more virtuous than vicious the nobler feminine qualities of sacrifice, sympathy etc. appear again. The virtues apart, prostitution is indeed an undesirable career for the woman, since it is an insult to humanity when the female body is sold to others on demand. Sex relation should always be spontaneous, a matter of mutual delight. But when this is not the case, the evil consequences may be innumerable. Nothing significant could be achieved by abolishing prostitution. On the other hand, man should be taught to treat a prostitute with due honour and respect in so far as she satisfies his needs. Something could be done by educating man who exploits a prostitute and casts all blame upon the poor woman. Prostitution is more dishonourable for the man than for the women. The final responsibility lies with the government policy to treat prostitution as a safety-valve for the society and not to encourage it in the name of freedom of human enjoyment against the so-called pressure of a rigid moral code. The institution of prostitution itself, on the other hand, should be controlled rigidly with due emphasis upon the dignity of the poor women and the best of what can be achieved out of such a profession.

The so-called vices of a woman are thus paradoxically related to her noble virtues. But the paradoxes can be resolved if we try to look into the essential nature of womanhood, namely, self-preservation and multiplication of life. If a woman commits any vice it is not because she necessarily prefers to be vicious

but because she is more interested in the end in view than the means adopted. The vice is the means of which the end happens to be the virtue. The virtues are the offshoots of her fundamental reproductive instinct and her vices are equally the same. If a woman is immoral, she is not to blame ; but the circumstance which owing to her weak intellect and lack of strong determination lead her on to the path of immorality is responsible to her is the life's immorality, the vital impulse. Woman's life is a continuous struggle between means and ends, because her primary concern is the end and the means she adopts are justified in view of the end which is good for the over all benefit of the family and the society. The woman's joy in the pain of child birth, her sacrifice for the offspring and also to some extent for her partner in life, her capacity for desperate bravery for the cause of human life, no matter however ignoble the means may be, are the several cardinal virtues which constitute her permanent claim to the highest place of respect, honour and dignity. Her mobility, docility, amenability and the quickness in taking great personal risks for the demands of life in general will place the woman on the highest rank of nature's creation. A bad step-mother is inevitably a good mother because her badness as a stepmother is well-justified in as much as a good step-mother is just an indifferent mother. Her badness as a step-mother shows how deep her mothers instincts could be. To undermine the nobler qualities of a woman by judging them horizontally (that is, on the surface level of their behaviour) is a gross injustice that one can possibly imagine.

The contribution of a woman to the welfare of the society is beyond any doubt in so far as the family is the unit of society and is good family is the outcome of the rather unrecognized and unrewarded service of the wise mother. As regards social field work or secretarial and academic jobs the service of woman is indeed very much desirable, not as a substitute but in addition to her service to the need of the family. Children are best taught and trained at the knees of their mother. The duties

self-assigned to women are to improve the society by improving the family unit consisting of man and the children through their sympathy, affection, active cooperation and assistance in all spheres to which only they are suited. The moral and spiritual force of a society lies in the woman. For maintaining the equilibrium of the society and its progress one has to acknowledge our indebtedness to woman, her cardinal virtues without which society would result in an uncontrollable chaos. From the ancient period down to the modern age history bears evidence to this conclusion. If a woman has to earn her own living, it is equally desirable only to minimise the undue masculine sense of possessiveness which is a sort of social evil. Woman is the symbol of domestic spiritual force which on a account of its immense potentiality can be fairly extended to public field and all, this, for the benefit of the society. The overemphasis on the superiority of man would only outgrow social progress and would lead to social disaster.

A good woman is better than a good man, a bad woman is worse than a bad man. But whether good or bad, the matter depends entirely upon the manner in which a woman is able in gearing her own impulsive forces. On the average scale this seems to be undesirable, since the act of gearing is a matter with the woman's whole life.

## WOMANS LIBERATION

*Amita Sen*

The theme of the present discussion is the liberation of women. Since my education, training and habits of thinking all belong to an age to be considered by no standard modern, I fear my views on the issue may not agree in all respects with these of modern thinkers.

I think I should begin by confessing that the suggestions contained in the term "Women's Liberation" cause a tremendous upsurge of feelings in me. No woman can disagree on the point that freedom is desirable. Enchainment is loathed by all. Even birds and beasts love freedom. I have no difference of opinion with women of this age when they claim that women must be emancipated and allowed to solve their own problems. There might however be some disagreement over the concrete vision of emancipation. What I have to say may not always be in tune with the stand taken by the women's liberation movement of to-day. For this disagreement, however, I have nothing to say towards my modern counterparts in terms of accusations. The main reason for any disharmony that might exist between the movement as it stands to-day and the movement as it used to be in our days is that women to-day face much more complicated problems than we did in our time. Major environment changes,

economic hardships, the tremendous rise in population, all have contributed towards the involvement of women in difficult and testing situations. If we are unable to change our social attitude to adjust to this changed condition to which the women of to-day are subjected, then the chances are that at each step we would cause them suffering and in turn get back suffering from them.

This is a man's world. Even to-day we are enslaved by the many restrictions imposed upon us by our male dominators. Not only have men curbed the freedom of women, but even to-day we have to silently put up with varieties of tortures. History offers examples of great men who have time and again come forward to relieve the sufferings of women. Hats off to them ! Although they were few in number, yet they had great power of mind, strong determination. What Vidyasagar alone had done towards opening new avenues leading to the emancipation of women still continues to furnish the basis of resistance offered by modern Indian women in their struggle for freedom. But how little has been our progress ! We are still submerged in a sea of sufferings ! Lately, I had commented as follows in front of a modern woman : "This century has given us many scholars, many eminent literary figures and politicians ; but we still need another Vidyasagar to lift us out of our misery." The lady flared up at my comment : "Do you still want to depend upon Vidyasagar ? Can't we solve our own problems ?" I adored her spirit. I told her "Dependence on male superiority has become a habit with our generation. We have lost all independent spirit."

The acutely miserable and disrespectful situation into which the women of to-day are thrown was unknown to India's ancient heritage. It may be remarked that looking backwards for support in traditional practices would not help us to solve our problems. In reply I like to insist that the practice of remembering our like thinking predecessors and paying homage to them before we embark on a similar journey is a worthy step to take.

It would add grace, inspiration and force to our movement if prior to our start we could concretely visualize images of actually liberated women. Their lives could help us to conduct ourselves with restraint and prevent us from losing our way in the great, disturbing and upsetting emotional upheavals which this movement is bound to generate. Brute physical strength will not help us to win the battle. Our equal claims would have to be established on the basis of our possession of an equally human soul, a soul which is able to feel compassion, love and sympathy for even its enemies and yet is capable of having an iron will.

Our legends make us familiar with the war-goddesses. With their multiple hands and weapons they strike terror into the hearts of the demons and evil forces. By implication we can understand that women were not looked upon as weak and insignificant in those ages. The source of all wisdom and scholarship is also a female figure. In the Vedic ages the sages always had their female counterparts who were considered equal matches for their male companions in respect of knowledge and practice of all kind of restraint in behaviour. Sometimes they even excelled the men in their powers of knowledge. Women like Maitreyi, Gargi, Apala, Lopamudra and Romasha were all highly respected, independent and liberated women. And yet they achieved this status not by abandoning grace and softness. They were all tender-hearted, devoted and chaste women by all standards.

Even the Puranas record the status of women as being quite high. Our encounter with Sita in the *Ramayanas* expose her as fearless and independent in thinking despite her total commitments to Rama as a wife. The reason why Ravana, one of the mightiest forces of the time dared not touch her was not her physical strength but her unconquerable restraint and her wholehearted devotion for Rama. The *Mahabharata* acquaints us with such spirited, self-sufficient and self-confident figures as Draupadi and Chitrangada. The determination with which



Gandhari pursued her humanism, the intellectual powers of Sulabha (in Santiparva) all testify to possession of remarkable mental strength. Men and women continued to be on a par for some ages till with the spread of Buddhism, the alienation of women as a class began. The almswomen formed a separate order. The feeling of equality began to wane. After this started the series of foreign invasions into India. People belonging different types of creeds and nationality streamed into the country. This pushed the women into seclusion behind the purdah as a protective measure. Restriction to indoor life was followed by male domination upon women. Domination brought with its own principles and rules. Education of women began to be discouraged and was finally stopped. Women retreated completely from the academic scene. Gradually they were imprisoned within the walls of domestic life. Although by the lingering flames of tradition they still continued as dimly lit goddesses, they were goddesses without any freedom. It is true that even in these dark ages, occasionally, like lightening flashes, a few great women characters have appeared. But their advent did not signify any stable return to the days of freedom for women. The lack of education crippled the female mind. Women lost all alertness concerning their own rights.

Coming back to the modern age we find that after a long fight women have been admitted into the same system of education as men. To-day, women prove themselves not only as equals of men in their capacity to learn, but in some cases they have even excelled men. But despite this successful step forward women have not been able to free themselves from various social restrictions. When I speak of freedom from social restrictions I do not mean thereby the cessation of all kinds of such restrictions. A river can be of service to its surrounding landscape only in the presence of a strong embankment. Otherwise it causes devastations through its flood-waters. There are certain social regulations the effects of which are beneficial for society as a whole. An effort to abide by such patterns of

conduct can help us to take part in fruitful and constructive social activities. We must, however, by all means, free ourselves from such social prohibitions as are unjust and delimit our human dignity. For this we need a revised educational system. Despite the progress of female education, the application of education for the uprooting of unjust social practices still meets with many obstacles. The number of women who gain access to education is also quite insignificant. This is particularly true of the rural and district areas where the number of agricultural and industrial labourers form the overwhelming section of the community. Education can hardly be said to have reached those remote areas. How can one expect people to devote time to formal education when they do not have enough to eat ? In most families both husband and wife have to labour throughout the day in order to provide for their basic needs. Ignorant as they are of the ways and means of family planning, most of the couples have large families. A girl of six or seven is usually overburdened with domestic duties which includes care of the younger members of the family. Occasionally the male children of such families might get the opportunity to attend the village schools but such facilities are usually not available to the female children. They have to run the domestic nursery service. On occasions of rural amusements like bear-dance or monkey dance, or at the sight of an elephant slowly proceeding with the jingling of bells round its neck, the young sister invariably runs out to join in the festive spirit, one of her hands clutching a baby to her breast, the other tightly holding on to the shoulders of another kid. One recalls Tagore's lines : "The young sister, overburdened with duties : the little image of the mother." We are so accustomed to this sight that it does not strike us as being unusual in the least. This is the worst symptom. It indicates that our mind has become insensitive to the injustice that is being done on the little girls. So far as the families to which they belong are concerned, there is hardly any time for them to devote to thoughts on women's freedom. Although these

families live everywhere as our neighbours we are certainly not intimately acquainted with their joys and sorrows. It is a regrettable fact but I must admit that I have no direct liason with the daily troubles that pester the lives of the very rich or the very poor of our people. So I prefer to limit my discussion to the problems pertaining to the lives of the low middle class, the class to which I myself belong.

The women of this class are usually highly educated and yet completely dependent on the opposite sex in every respect. Before marriage they are subjected to the rule of the father, after marriage they are dominated by their husband, in old age they are controlled by their sons. Heavy wedding costs make the daughter a liability to the parent. So they desire a male offspring. After the wedding is over the family of the in-laws begin a process of torture on the bride as compensatory measure for any possible loss encountered by the bridegroom's party in the marriage transaction. The poor girl has to bear the torture without any protest for they have no further scope of returning to their father's place. When the situation becomes intolerable they pour kerosene on their clothes and burn themselves to death. If these girls could earn for themselves they would not have to die like this. They could free themselves from their in-laws' families as well as from their paternal tribes and live for themselves a healthy life. Employment opportunities must be made equally available to both boys and girls.

Far from being abolished dowry system is crossing all limits day by day. Concerning this matter it must be said that those who accept dowry and those who offer dowry are equally guilty for perpetrating the crime. In spite of so much social reform, fervent talks, ladies' association activities etc. none of the concerned members of a wedding party show any sign of change in mentality concerning acceptance of dowry. we have become modern in our talks and in our writings but not in our actions. The bright and educated youths of our country,

expert in discussing literature, politics and all sorts of cultural issues, even interested in social reform, suddenly turn into very obedient sons of their parents at the time of marriage. If the young men of our country could say with determination that they would have only the bride and not the dowry that she might bring then the problem could be solved so much more easily. But alas ! this is still a remote possibility or why should the rate of bridal suicide go on increasing at such a rate ? The only alternative left is for the girls to resolve not to marry a boy who would accept dowry. Here again the question of financial independence is important. Unless women can earn and maintain themselves how can they make such a difficult resolution of preparing to live without the help of male support.

The problem however is not solved even with scope for financial independence. Many unmarried women may not find it enough just to earn money to support themselves. Desire for sexual satisfaction may thrust them into deviant behaviour as a result of which they may find themselves with child. Our society knows no pardon for behaviour leading to such catastrophic results. Women have to atone for it either by suicide or by straying into the path of prostitution.

Widowhood is still a problem in our society. In extended families they had some sort of a place. At least food was not scarce and the children of the family usually clung to these women and filled their lives to some extent. With the springing up of nuclear families the problem of widows has become several times magnified. Some such families may provide shelter to the widow mother but the situation becomes very acute in the case of widow sisters and sister-in-law.

Mere provision of food and shelter are not enough to solve the problem of widows. Young widows are sometimes subjected to severe criticisms because of their renewed interest in life and their expressions of such interests. Our society still expects the widows to keep up to the ideal of strict stoicism for the rest of their lives.

Our country has approved the divorce act like many other countries of the world. Let me admit at the very beginning that from my heart I cannot support divorce. The reason why I cannot do so is the cause of the children of divorced parents. Children of broken homes are a world-wide concern now. Divorce may be sought for a variety of reasons like lack of harmony between couples, because of oppression by one partner, or due to presence of a third person and so on. Whatever the reason, once the divorce has taken place, our law would allow greater rights to the father over the child than to the mother. Can there be a greater injustice than this? All around us our eyes meet the sight of women carrying children in their arms. How many of the fathers are seen burdened with children clinging to their arms, breasts and legs? This unjust law has to be changed. Whatever the reason behind divorce, the right to children should go to the mother and not to the father. The period of custody of children should extend not only up to twelve years of the child's age (during which hard labour is needed to bring up the child) but should extend right up to the age of reaching adulthood.

Where women can earn and support themselves they can, to an extent, conceal their unhappiness and carry on through life. They can also afford to take the help of law to demand from their husbands whatever is their due. But those who have no financial backing cannot even take the help of law. How wretched is their condition! Women actually need some sort of cooperative financial assistance system to help them out of such crisis periods in life. With some financial help available women can fight cases with their husbands to obtain from them their lawful share. For this it is further necessary to make women aware of their legal status.

There exist another group of women who refuse to accept any help from their husbands even if they have to undergo extreme hardship. They labour hard to raise their children on their own and the children, in their turn, do not know their

father. But even for them, they have to mention the father's name in every major step of their life in applying for a ration-card, in applying for admission to college, in applying for passport. They must remember the father in every important moment of their life even if they regard their father with utter hatred. Not only does the harassment end there. Even the woman has to write and speak out the name of the dreaded husband if she is casting a vote during the elections. Such laws which deny any separate identity and self-respect to women as human beings desperately need to be changed.

Sexual difference evolved in nature primarily as an experimentation in the methods of reproduction. Sexual reproduction helped to create variety and novelty while at the same time retaining some identity of the new generation with the old. The male and the female were not meant by nature to fight against each other for that would stop the process of creation. Men and women are naturally adapted to unite with each other, passionately, lovingly. Men may and ever shall, fight with men and women with women. But from the war between men and women a much greater disaster can result.

India has a traditional ideal of womanhood which places a strong emphasis on virtues like self-sacrifice, patience etc. Motherhood is another important constituent of this ideal. Different countries of the world agree in their ideals of womanhood in the respect that is placed by all upon motherhood. A woman is fated to bear a child, to give birth to a child and to bring up the child. Even if she desires to be free like a man she can never actually be so by reason of her potential or actual motherhood. The sacrifices that a mother makes for her child are limitless; her patience, her love are unlimited. Is this maternal commitment a slavery? Far from it. Service to the child fills the mother with blessedness. The importance and significance of the love that a woman can give to her child and to her husband should never be underrated. Her love and her untiring services to make the house beautiful go a long way to

make life beautiful and worth living. It is at the basis of all family ties that ultimately weld families into one and help to promote social solidarity as well. It is her love which is responsible for making our little home feel like a "heaven upon earth." Whoever enters such a home can at once feel the touch of comfort and peace. There is no doubt that such a home is a combined creation of men and women.

When we were housewives men were the breadwinners and the women used to run the household. The question of being dominated never struck us. This was largely because women exercised an unquestioned authority in all household matters. The husbands had to accept the terms dictated by their wives in the domestic sphere. The arrangement was just the reverse in all issues outside the home front. Wives had to depend on husbands then. This arrangement did not appear too bad to us. Both the parties could live with some comfort and ease. But the situation has changed now. Due to severe economic hardships women have to go out to work now. This means that running the household could no longer be the sole concern of the woman. She suddenly finds her labour doubled. She has to work at home as well as outside the home. Unless the male members of the household come forward to help the women it becomes virtually impossible for the housewife to look after the home well. Women of this generation thus accept male help naturally, without any hesitation. But we, who belong to the past generation, often are shocked to see our boys washing utensils while their wives cook the dinner. But the shock subsides with only a little rational thinking on the situation.

However, in spite of all the inevitable changes that are creeping in and that would continue to creep in, I, must confess having a great attraction for the traditional Indian ideal of womanhood. Draupadi never ate till every member of the household had eaten, never rested till everybody else had retired. She never felt her role as being one of slavery, enchainment or humiliation. She accepted her role as the duty of her feminine

existence. She loved her family and so she derived happiness from serving them. Herein lay her freedom too. This ideal of selflessness still runs through the veins of our women. They are great in their acts of self-sacrifice even today. However, I must note that such selfsacrifice is a joy only where there is love and reciprocity. Work is a burden and life a drudgery to a woman whose love has not been returned. Such a woman is truly turned into a slave. Freedom from such slavery is definitely desirable.

Women of today want to be the equal of men in all respects. I feel proud to say that they have succeeded to be so in almost all fields in climbing mountain peaks, in flying aeroplanes, in gunfights. They have proved themselves to be fitting matches for their male competitors in every sphere of training and education. This is certainly something to be proud of. But to confess weakness where cause for such weakness exists should bring with it no sense of false humiliation or dishonour. I should say that such a confession ought to have a charming effect rather than throwing shame on an individual sex or group for the incapability. I shall describe an event of my childhood in this connection. When we were young girls we had a funny way of being escorted to the fair ground to watch the display of fire works at night during the annual Paush festivals. Boys who were of our age only used to form a ring with our teachers holding bamboo sticks in their hands and we used to get inside that ring. Then the whole group proceeded like this through the crowded fair. The boys bore the pressure and strain of pressing through the crowd while we went to the show and came back entirely safe. We never felt any humiliation in the protection thus offered to us. We have had a very comfortable life under male protection. But the women of today know no rest. They rear children, they take care of the house, they go out to earn. There is a story of unending scores of duties, of limitless labour. So it is not surprising that they speak harshly, with discontent and impatience. The situation has changed and so the language which is an expression of the situation must also change. It would be wise, however, to guard against too much severity even in use of language.



## **PART 2**

# **STUDIES IN INDIVIDUAL ISSUES**



## **RAPE : A RISING THREAT IN THE WESTERN WORLD**

*Karabi Sen*

Crime trends in most countries of the world today follow a complex pattern. While some countries show some rate of decline for some traditional forms of crime, the same countries may be disturbed by the emergence of and increasing rates of other crimes of national and international magnitude. Affluence and poverty may lead to the same type of behaviour due to the presence of complex psychological factors. Again, each of these reverse types of conditions beget evils of their own. Different types of religious and philosophical traditions have different ways of control over social behaviour and are revealed in greater and lesser frequency rates of some forms of crime. Differing rates of industrialization and urbanization also have their influences on crime rates although here too the same condition might lead to the production of varying consequent situations due to the presence of other complicating factors. Industrialization might occur with distingeneration of social life, isolation and increase in violent crimes and crimes against the person : but industrialization also might be there without these symptoms and might actually be accompanied by a decline in many forms of crime. A study of world crime trends against background of their general socio-economic situations thus

shows an erratic relationship existing between the two, the relationship in question being disturbed by the presence and absence of many inscrutable factors neither detected nor enlisted in the background statistical data of world social situations prepared by the United Nations. Most of the material included there are collected from government documents and papers of international seminars and are too meagre to cover the wide and complex range of social phenomena. This, coupled with a negative public attitude in reporting crime, make it difficult to trace the proper connection between social situation and crime trends. Unless this can be traced, however, effective crime prevention or control measures cannot be taken.

The reported crime trends in some countries against this background are as follows :

**BANGLADESH :** Although there is a slight decrease in the total number of reported crimes since 1972, violent crimes like murders, robbery, dacoity and burglary endanger public life to a considerable extent. Sexual offences have never created any problems in the country.

**HONGKONG :** While murder and manslaughter have remained rather stable, assaults and intimidation, robbery, burglary, theft, fraud have increased rapidly. Drug offences and youth gangs also prove serious problems.

**INDIA :** The total number of reported crimes has constantly been on the increase. The highest increase was noted in riots, dacoity, counter feiting, cheating, murder and theft. The rate of juvenile delinquency has increased greatly but still the rate of juvenile delinquency in relation to total cognizable offences remained quite low. Bandit tribes and gangs cause trouble in rural areas of some states but urban gangs have never reached such a stage as to be considered a serious threat to general law and order. Political and religious crimes are also emerging. It is reported that since the declaration of martial law in June 1975 Crime trends have gone down effectively.

**INDONESIA :** Sexual offences, kidnapping, robbery, fraud and various types of white collar crimes have been on the increase. Juvenile delinquency and corrupt practices among civil servants are other aspects of the crime situation.

**IRAN :** There is a rising trend in juvenile delinquency and misdemeanour cases. Felony cases have remained stable.

**JAPAN :** The numbers of homicide and robbery have remained constant but rape, physical injury, assault have decreased. Juvenile delinquency follows an erratic trend. Organized crime has decreased. Crimes against environment due to increased industrialization are receiving attention.

**MALAYASIA :** Violent crimes like murder and assault are increasing whereas rape, fraud and various types of white collar crimes have remained stable. Juvenile delinquency has increased.

**NEPAL :** Crime and delinquency in Nepal have been very limited in extent. Both have created problems related to drug offence since the hemp plant, from which hashish is obtained grows everywhere in Nepal.

**PAKISTAN :** The incidence of violent crimes has traditionally been quite high in Pakistan, particularly crimes like offences against the person. Addictions to alcohol and drugs and sexual offences are rare or negligible.

**THE PHILIPPINES :** Since the declaration of martial law the crime rate has decreased considerably.

**REPUBLIC OF KOREA :** There has been clear increase in the crimes of rape, assault and juvenile delinquency.

**SINGAPORE :** There are upward trends in rape, kidnapping, abduction, juvenile delinquency.

**SRI LANKA :** There are steady rises in crimes like homicide, robbery, burglary, larceny, arson, abduction grievous hurt and rape.

**THAILAND :** There have been upward trends in most crimes including that of drug addiction and juvenile delinquency.

**LATIN AMERICA :** The situation here is influenced considerably by the political uncertainty that prevails there. This factor has given birth to different forms of terrorism like aerial hijacking, kidnapping and other types of violence. Apart from these other notable crimes include genocide of indigenous population groups representing the original inhabitants of the region, illicit traffic in drugs, traffic in firearms, the use of patients, especially children, for experimentation with new pharmaceutical products, incidents in connexion with family planning.

**POLAND AND OTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES OF EASTERN EUROPE :** These countries claim a decline in all forms of criminality. Most of these claim to have achieved this through planning in the field of prevention to which include general plans for economic, social and cultural development. They follow a method of combination of state coercion with social and moral treatment applied especially towards persons who have committed minor offences. Considerable attention is given to living conditions, employment, cultural and educational work. All socialist states plan to make an attempt to prevent criminality in its earliest phase i.e., among young people. They aim to eliminate negative factors in shaping the personality of a young man, like lack of emotional stability, egocentrism or aggressiveness. Poland carries out research in "criminogenic factors or circumstances" and this has proved beneficial for prevention of crime. Great social benefits are derived from such crime prevention measures because such measures protect society against the moral and material damages that result from the commission of crimes. These damages are often irreversible in spite of the fact that the offenders have been detected and convicted. The benefits can also be measured by the general decrease in criminality. The German Democratic Republic claims that the structure of crime has changed essentially in that country. Armed assault, terrorism,

the taking of hostages, kidnapping, organized drug-trafficking have nearly disappeared. Major crimes account for no more than 5% of punishable acts. More than half of those acts are offences against property causing relatively slight damage. Thus the crime situation in the GDR contrasts with the crime situation in many Western countries both in terms of quantity and types of criminal acts and their gravity. It may be noted that GDR claims to have no unemployment. Men and women, adults and youths receive equal pay for equal work. A great deal of attention is paid to the reformation of juvenile offenders and this is carried on in close association with the families of juveniles. It is also significant that the socialist society exercises its responsibility for the rehabilitation of offenders.

UNITED STATES AND SOME WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES : Reports showed that murder decreased by 8%, robbery by 10%, while rape increased by 1%, Police departments hold that even a few years ago rape used to be one of the least reproted crimes of violence. But today, rape is the fastest rising violent crime in the U.S.A. According to the police every woman in the U.S. should be aware of the possibility of being raped because it can happen to anyone. How easy a target one is depends on one's surroundings and on one's ability to recognize potentially dangerous situations. The rapist has no regard for age, race, or social status. It is not a selective crime. It makes little difference to the rapist who will be his victim. Rape victims range in age from a few months to 96 years old. It happens in schools, in cars, in streets, in parks, in alleys.

UNITED KINGDOM : The number of sexual offences have continued to fall. For a number of years there has been a decline in the recorded number of certain homosexual offences and in offences of indecent assault on a female. The murder rate also has remained relatively stable and firearms are rarely used. Offences against the person have remained a very small pro-

portion of all crime in England and Wales, accounting for less than 5% of the total.

**THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY :** Theft under aggravating circumstances made 34·5 of all offences reported. Theft without aggravating circumstances accounted for another 30·4%. Fraud constituted 7% of the total number of offences while murder, robbery, bodily injury, felonies and misdemeanours against personal liberty made up the rest of the percentage.

**FRANCE :** Reported crime is on the rise. In Austria the crime rate has fallen. In Switzerland, 60% of all offences were property crimes, 11% were crimes against the person 8% were sexual crimes and 21% were other offences.

Criminologists believe that setting aside all details and peculiarities of regional crime developments, it can be concluded that, crime in Western Europe, Canada and the U.S.A. has risen during the past decade. The Socio-economic developments have brought about a rise in the risk of social and personal conflicts. Criminality in Western Europe appears to be under complex forces of change. The old forms of criminality associated with poverty and urbanization are still there. New forms of criminality arising out of a new type of deprivation which is largely cultural and emotional seems to have emerged and is spreading. There is a large-scale cultural and social disorganisation in existence together with conflicts of values in the minds of the people. This is expressed in alcoholism, drug abuse, new forms of prostitution, aggressive sexual behaviour, suicide, rise in female criminality and patho-social criminality resulting out of alienation. Studies on crime trends suggest to experts a possible "Europeanization" of criminality. The chief characteristic of Europeanization is a new style of anonymity and prudence. The types of crime which are on the increase are mainly kidnapping, armed robberies, hold-ups, swindles, vandalism, homicides, burglary, theft, assault, battery and rape. I shall select the last as a case for study.



What is being done in the U. S. to combat rape which is the fastest rising violent crime in that country ? The rapist, who is a repeat offender, continues to victimize women until arrested. He is under a compulsion to hurt, degrade and humiliate his victim and his tool for this is the sex act. There is no way to identify the rapist from his looks. According to the protectors of law, any male, with a good opportunity is a potential rapist.

Under the circumstances the police in different states have issued pamphlets outlining a number of safety tips and self-protection methods. They supply us with safety tips for use at home.

#### SAFETY AT HOME :

Replace or rekey locks when you move into a new home or apartment. Install a door viewer and a 1" deadbolt lock and use them. Look before opening your door to anyone.

Keep doors locked at all times and instruct children to never open the door to strangers.

Require all strangers to show identification. If you haven't called for a repairman, don't let one inside. Leave him waiting outside and call his place of business to verify his reason for being in your area.

Don't let a stranger inside your home to use the phone; make the call for him.

Never admit that you or a neighbourer home alone.

Women living alone should use only initials on mailboxes and in telephone listing.

Leave outside lights on at night, and keep light on in more than one room.

If you receive an obscene phone call—hang up—don't react.

**SAFETY TIPS WHILE DRIVING :**

**Never pick up hitchhikers.**

**Keep car doors locked at all times.**

**Before entering your car, look into the back seat.**

**Always have your keys ready to unlock the car door and enter without delay. Never walk across the parking lot digging in your purse for your keys ; have them in your hand before leaving the building.**

**Make certain you have enough gas to get where you are going and always keep your vehicle in good running condition.**

**If possible, travel on well lighted, busy streets and avoid isolated back roads and short cuts.**

**If you are being followed, drive to the nearest open business for help, or drive to the Police or Fire Station.**

**Park in areas that will be well lighted when you return.**

**Never leave your house keys with your car keys at a service station or parking lot.**

**Women driving alone should never stop to aid a stranger in a stalled vehicle. Proceed to an open business, and report the stalled vehicle to the police.**

**If you have trouble, raise the hood, and stay in your vehicle. When someone offers assistance, roll the window down just enough to talk to them. Ask them to stop at the first phone to call a relative, friend, garage or the police for you. Never get into a stranger's car.**

**SAFETY TIPS WHILE WALKING ETC. :**

**When possible, avoid walking alone. Walk with someone, or walk in areas where other people are near.**

Stay in well lighted areas, away from alleys, bushes and entry ways.

Avoid shortcuts through parks, vacant lots and other deserted places.

Don't hitchhike or accept rides from strangers.

If a driver stops to ask you directions avoid getting near the car. If you are being followed, go to the nearest business or residence for help.

If you are harrassed by the occupants of a car, simply turn and walk the other direction. The driver will have to turn around to follow you.

Hold your purse close, not dangling, and avoid carrying extra money or valuables on your person.

When you return home, have your door key ready so that you can enter without delay.

The magnitude of the problem can be sensed from the detailed instructions that are thus prepared by the police with such care. It is also evident from advertisements which newspapers carry as a matter of as much unconcern as routine advertisements of detergents and cosmetics. •

The German Democratic Republic follows crime prevention programmes of a different pattern. It is claimed that there is no unemployment in the GDR. Wages and salaries are paid according to the quantity and quality of the work performed. Men and women, adults and youths are said to receive equal pay for equal work. Besides efforts at betterment of living conditions great attention is paid to the rehabilitation of offenders and the reform of juvenile offenders. For the latter purpose penal institutions work closely with the juvenile's families and with youth welfare agencies.

The crime prevention network in the US and Western Euro-

pean countries as well as in the East European countries are not thorough going enough to ensure a greater and greater advancement towards a securer society. Although the East European states claim to have achieved a declining trend in most of the violent crimes they do acknowledge a continuous threat to the morale of their people trickling in through contact with Western cultures. Does this fear of being overpowered by superior cultural forces expose an inherent cultural weakness or lack of strong traditional binding ? Or does this reveal similar susceptibilities of human nature enforced by common racial and cultural origins of people who have now migrated beyond the European mainland to the American and Australian continents ? It is remarkable the most of our major crimes occur in varying degrees throughout the world. It is equally remarkable that certain crimes show a conspicuously low trend in certain countries. If we ask about the reasons behind these two parallel trends in crime the answers can help us a great deal in formulating effective crime prevention programmes.

As the main concern of the present paper is the prevention of rape, I shall select rape as the case which illustrates the running together of the two parallel crime trends. Our previous analysis of world crime trends have shown the rate of frequency of this crime in the major countries of the world. The point of interest is that some cases of rape are reported even in countries in which it does not present a major problem of crime. Although the Muslim countries claim a general absence of indecent behaviour towards women resulting out of strict religious control it still has to be take into account that the Muslim women need to cover themselves with elaborate dress arrangements (borkha) before they can appear in public. This shows that the Muslim male population is as much susceptible to unlawful sexual attraction for the opposite sex as any other section of the male population of the world and that the force of religious precepts has to be supplemented by the weight, thickness and expanse of clothes for the protection of the

female body. Moreover, the practice of keeping many wives in the royal harem as well as in the ordinary household may not appear as expressive of a general sexual restraint on the part of the male population. The Hindus of the neighbouring kingdoms were quite familiar with sexual orgies of the Muslim invaders. The mass practice of "Jawhar" amongst women which meant burning themselves to death voluntarily in order to protect their honour when the Hindus were defeated at the hands of their Muslim invaders testify that the Muslims did not treat the womenfolk of the enemy camp with much respect.

To come to the Hindus of India, although rape has always been a rarity here, incidents of rape are reported in the epics as well as in the ancient Buddhist literatures. The case of Ahalya who was raped by one of her husband's students and finally had the curse lifted from her by the divine mercy of Rama is a well-known example from the Ramayana. The attempt of Duhshasan to forcibly take off the garments of Draupadi, his royal cousin's wife, in public, in as safe a place as the royal court in the presence of her five husbands and all the senior members of her in-law's family also shows that despite the presence of strong sexual taboos in the culture, individuals often suffered from sex perversity. The Buddhist literature of Therigatha (verse 4.01) describes the story of the rape of Uppalavanna which possibly led Buddha to prohibit forests as a dwelling place for alms women. Buddha probably realised the undesirability of a solitary forest life for women as a result some alms women being sexually abused by men in the forests. The definite omission of one rule for alms women while it continued to be allowed for alms men could not have been made solely on account of an hypothetical occurrence, but more probably as the result of some particular happenings. Before the rape of Uppalavanna it was not forbidden for women to dwell in the forest. So Uppalavanna went to live in the dark forest, built herself a hut, set up a bed in her hut and hung curtain on her doors and windows.

One day a previous lover of hers, who was also her kinsman, went into the forest in search after her. He found the hut and hid under the bed. When Uppalavanna, who had gone out, returned to the hut she was overpowered by him. The man raped her and left. Thereupon she narrated her case to other alms women who told the alms men and the alms men told Buddha about the incident. The case give rise to a great deal of discussion and Buddha, the Blessed one, praised in his verses the flawless character of Uppalavanna, her innocence and her restraints relating to the pleasure of the senses. However, since the situation might lead to further awkward conditions Buddha summoned the king of Kosala and said to him : "Your Majesty in this religion young women of family, as well as young men of family, renounce many kins folk and much wealth, and retire from the world, and take up residence in the forest. In case women reside in the forest, it is possible that evil minded men inflamed by passion may conduct themselves towards them with disrespect and arrogance, do them violence and bring their religious life to naught. Therefore a place of residence for the community of alms women should be erected on one side of the city." It is recorded that since that time the almswomen stayed only within the city or just outside the city walls. Simiiarily, women were instructed not to go about singly. When Dhammadinna asked her teachers if she might go into retreat in a village abode, she was allowed to go, but accompanied. She also returned accompanied. If she were an alms man, she would almost certainly have been allowed to go into the forest or village alone. Such precautions were thought to be necessary for the safety of the weaker sex.

The social practices and measures of the Hindus show that women were not completely above molestation by men. The situation worsened after contact with the Muslim invaders resulting in overall tightening of security measures for women which thrust them into seclusion and misery. In fact condition of women began to improve only after contact with the British

settlers. The British in collabortion with Indians enlightened with the new education and contact with European civilization, helped finally to draw the curtain over the long dark ages for women in India by enacting laws and enforcing them also by the general spread of education and the ideas of the renaissance. It must be admitted, however, that although the Hindu Society had multifarious means of oppressing and exploiting women, still the importance of the mother-figure and the respect it commanded protected women from sexual molestation to a considerable extent. By and large, women were safe inside the Hindu communities and the morale of the people was high in this respect. The great restraint which King Ravana showed in respect of Sita whom he had forcibly carried away from her husband's home but whom he would not forcibly marry or otherwise forcibly enjoy is truly commendable. The refusal of Rama and Lakshmana to be seduced by Surpanakha Ravana's sister, also speaks of strength of character. The same tradition of looking upon women primarily as mother-figures persist even today and helps in keeping down our statistics of rape.

In contrast, the situation in the United States shows rape as the fastest growing crime in that country. What are the factors that have been responsible for this steep rise in sexual crimes in the North American and West European countries ? There was a time when sex crime rates were not unusually high and maintained a stable curve even in these countries. What is the difference in the social situation between the time when such crimes were not so alarming and the present when big cities, lonely forests, peaceful ranches are all equally dangerous for women ? What could have happened to cause such a shattering degeneration of the great European civilization that carried within it the wisdom and knowledge of the Greeks, the purifying influence of Christ, the fiery genius of the Renaissance talents and the great scientific advancements of the last three centuries ? Among the causes responsible for this disintegration of values are the two

world wars. The devastations caused by wars have made men realize that life is brittle and that it might be a foolery to wait and win our rewards and satisfactions. The general insecurity of life has tempted men to snatch at the pleasures of life. It has caused considerable bewilderment and neurotic conditions amongst the older as well as the younger generations. Men and women, old and young alike seek immediate satisfactions for their longings. They are sceptical about the possibility of eternal or absolute values, critical of the ideas of self-sacrifice, resentful of the prospects of surrendering individual liberty for the sake of the group and pessimistic about the existence of spiritual values. They are exuberant about the body and its comforts, pleasures and lures. Angry and bitter in their thinking, self-seeking in their love, loud and noisy in their artistic expressions, suffering from exhibitionist tendencies in their dress, succumbing to addictions for drugs the post war generation is passing through a stage of such social turmoil and confusion that it is inevitable that in the absence of some strong spiritual guidelines to reshape both individual and social life for the sake of achieving some stabler satisfactions for greater and greater numbers of people, staggering incidents of rape, juvenile crimes and child abuse would occur frequently. If in a society a large number of children are left virtually to *raise themselves* on streets then it can normally be expected that they shall grow up without any special sense of regard, respect, tenderness or gratitude for the mother image. To them the female body would be representative of its capacity to satisfy sexual urge alone. Deprived of motherly love, not knowing the security and warmth of the mother's body, having grown up without the taste of mother's milk or the pleasure of sucking at the mother's breast, this generation would not know how the mother is symbolized in every member of the opposite sex and what is the most appropriate behaviour towards the form of feminine existence. Yet as human beings endowed with memory and the power and eagerness to form relations and associations of love, these



youths long for the womanly touch, are easily overwhelmed by the mystery shrouding a member of the opposite sex. Some of them may harbour in themselves ambivalent emotions concerning women. They may feel at once bitter and resentful, curious and love thirsty about women. They are hungry for their companionship and yet are consumed by a desire to throw filth on them. They are constantly seeking for women, to forcibly occupy them, to enjoy and take a share of that due of which they were deprived in their childhood. To this condition of internal unrest is added provocation from the external field. The exposure of the female body is increasing as fast as rape. It is true that the target of rape may not be a victim of exhibitionism. She may even be beyond sexual charm or too early for it. But the general atmosphere around the rapist may pressure him so much that in his worked up condition he gives way to the presence of the object as a lump of flesh even if there is no immediate and overt sex signal coming from it at that time. The result of this agitated condition is rape.

The only way to achieve a declining rate in rape is to restore to the rapist a feeling of respect for a woman, for her body and her soul, i.e., for her entire existence. He has to be trained to look upon her as a totality of spirit and body. He has to be led to read the true message of her body. That sex and reproduction are two primary natural processes by means of which bisexual creatures maintain the survival of their species is a fact of which the rapist is perhaps aware only as a piece of theoretical knowledge. If he is brought up outside the normal home atmosphere where the parents have sexual ties with each other, he cannot accept sexual relations between man and woman as a fundamental fact of life as necessary and as common place as food and toilet. He cannot prevent himself from feeling uneasy and tense upon exposure to sex and when the opportunity comes, he is swept away by irresistible passion. He has no control over himself. According to the reports of a young rapist describing his first act of rape on a woman in a lonely park :

"The whole area suddenly seemed to be engulfed in darkness when I first saw her. I felt that all around me was a black sea and she was the only spot of light visible. She glowed and glowed, became bigger and brighter, came nearer and nearer to me. After that I do not remember anything else. When I regained consciousness I found myself with the police and was told that I had raped a woman. I saw the woman I had hurt, and felt ashamed at what I had done to her. I asked her forgiveness. She was kind and forgave me. I repent what I had done and I am trying hard to correct myself. But I still fear myself and cannot trust my powers of self-control."

A contrasting case-study was offered by *James Clay*, a veteran rapist who had raped about five women before he was finally caught and jailed. A rough middle aged man with disbelieving eyes, he narrated his tales of rape with much pride. He was bent upon asserting his virility through these acts. He was not in the least ashamed of what he had done. He did not think that women deserved any better treatment. He treated them exactly as bottles of beer to be enjoyed and then discarded. Women, in his eyes, were "things" and not "persons" or human beings. He was too bitter about them to recognize in them any power to feel pain or happiness, honour or insult. He did not have a very happy childhood.

These two men appeared to me to stand at two ends of the same road. They had traversed a common path but had ended their journey with two different feelings. They had done the same act but out of two different types of provocation. In both of these cases the image of the woman was grossly distorted. She was not seen as a person with whom one could have normal social relations of a multiple nature. Nor was her sex appeal respected and treated with the care and tenderness proper to that which houses and nourishes life. Her sex was seen in its immediate appeal. The rapist's eyes are not trained to see beyond the immediacy of an object. In order to free him from his slavery to the immediate present he has to be trained to look at

the object present before him as a symbol of something greater, more universal and more eternal than itself.

The traditional Indian mind in which the good and the beautiful are locked together by indivisible bonds looks upon the female form primarily as the carrier and the nourishing energy of life. Her sex is a symbol of her fertility, the key to her role as the mother. She is the chief figure responsible for the procreation, sustenance and betterment of the species. Due to this firm conviction in the sanctity of sex, the sex act was never allowed to be indulged in any irresponsible or loose manner where the man might enjoy the woman against her will. Inside the marriage relation she had at least the chances to fulfil her prospects of maternity in a socially acceptable manner. The sex act outside the marriage relation was also considered with contempt for love alone was not thought of as enough justification for indulging in sexual intercourse. It was to be treated as a rite, as a social duty of married couples and of youth, for the sake of begetting children. Of course it was recognized that the act was best done when emotion combined with respect of partners for each other.

The general awareness that female sex derived its grace and allure from the necessity to win over the male to perform the sex act and thus to assure the survival of the species led to the belief that the female figure had a divine beauty. Barring stray cases of individual deviation, rape thus never could grow into a problem of national significance. Nude female figures were and still are worshipped in public as Divine Mother. As far back as the Indus Valley Civilization ( the third millenium BC ) the female figure was carved as the representative of the mother goddess. The nude mother goddess engraved on a gold plaque unearthed in the burial mounds at Lauriya Nandangarh ( 7th-8th Century B.C ) clearly stands for the fertility spirit with the heavy hips and the marked pudendal cleft. The "YAKSHIS" of Mathura ( 2nd century A.D. ) with large bare breasts and wide hips also suggest fertility. Art

interpreters believe that in early Indian art female figures universally suggested eroticism and fertility. Very often female figures were associated with trees which are symbols of fertility. Sometime rows of children actually clung to these nude figures reminding one of the stark reality of the actual process of child birth, of how, upon first arriving on this earth, the naked child lies between the thighs of the naked mother and how deeply and tenderly the mother loves her newly born during those moments. The Yakhi or Vrikshaki, always shown in association with trees represents nature from which all that lives, animals, plants and men, take their rise. Prithivi or the earth goddess is also the Mother to whose bosom the dead finally go back for rest as the child seeks the mother when it want rest and sleep. The Surasundaris or Apsaras on the wall of medieval temples, locked in final sexual embrace with men show the naturalness with which sexual delight was accepted as a part of life. The Hindu artist expressed sex as a charming part of daily life. They emphasized that the sexually desirable qualities of a female figure were also those that suggested her fertility. It is because sex led to fertility that it was divine, natural and necessary. It has been said that Hindu art, with its spirit of acceptance displaying lack of fear at the existence of sexual impulses, can be used as a therapeutic process. With the merger of the signs of femininity, sexuality and motherhood the chances of enjoying a woman as we enjoy an item of food diminish. Sex ceases to mean mere sex but is understood to be a process leading to a further important result. When the language of sex is properly understood and its place in life is rationally appreciated then it is possible for us to have better controlled emotional responses towards people. The more intelligent we can make our emotions, the better are our chances of making ourselves and others happy.

What effect can the exposure to Indian aesthetics and philosophy produce on people accustomed to Western civilization? The ideas of mother goddess and fertility spirits are not

entirely foreign to the western art or religion. The early sixth century statue from Megara Hyblal in Sicily which was reconstructed from 936 fragments forms a powerful representation of the fertility goddess, Demeter, sucking twins. She was the chief deity of the Greeks who lived in Sicily. The Venuses of the Paleolithic period like the "Venus of Laussel" from Dordogne in France and the "Venus of Willendorf" from Austria emphasize exuberant breasts, hips and other things which suggest relatedness to fertility cults and rites. The potential fecundity conducive to the propagation of species, strongly supported by subconscious memories of early life experiences of nurture by a female figure induces us to perceive beauty in heavy breasts which are the organs of nutrition. The wide pelvis shows capacity to house the embryo till full maturity and hence is attractive. It is true that if one goes through the Graceo-Roman section in the Louvre Museum in Paris the number of female figures with children clinging to them are fewer in comparison to the abundance of images of fertility hovering around the female figures in Indian art. The ancient Egyptian section is more glaringly devoid of child figures with only one or two examples of sucking figures or figures of child with mother. The art objects of this section abound with representations of useful commodities of everyday life, like articles of food, carriers, weapons, some recurring animal figures, particularly those of birds, fish, dogs and also some recurring shapes and designs. The deficiency in Greek culture was amply made good by the new wave of Christian influence which flooded European art with numerous representations of mother and child. One cannot but be struck by this difference in trend as one moves from the Graceo-Roman section to the section containing the works of the Dutch and Italian masters. Not only do the shapes of the female figures change to a motherly loveliness, but their facial expressions also become softer, more human, more compassionate and sweet. Their faces speak of deep experiences. The faces and bodily gestures of the Greek Venuses and Aphrodites, how-

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ever proportionate and smooth, remain lifeless in contrast. The theme of art also can be seen to have undergone change. Human relations expressing inward experiences begin to assume more importance than descriptions of the body or natural scenes.

Perhaps it might become possible some day to discover ways and means of controlling the possible genetic factors influencing criminal tendencies in man. While it is relatively easy for Western science and technology to achieve this result the successful implementation of such knowledge and technique would need several reconditionings of the ethical environment. Unavoidable moral issues would be raised and the structure of the whole social environment would have to be questioned, reassessed and reconstructed. Such a transvaluation of values seems to be impending for the Western societies as it is for our society. In these days when it is impossible to avoid exposure to all parts of the world due to the existence of such varied media of communication, it would be wrong and unwise for any society to keep its doors shut towards the others. Instead of treating such exposure as a threat to be avoided or as a phenomenon to be ignored, it may be to its advantage to accept it as a facility to be made use of, as a challenge to our powers of learning and intelligent adjustment to new conditions.

The alarming increase in the varieties and rate of violent crime and juvenile delinquency in contemporary society probably deserves as much attention as the dire economic porverty of the third world countries due to the reason that the former is as much a threat to the survival of our species as the latter. It is significant that the crimes of homicide, rape or even house-breaking have no direct relationship with the conomic poverty but are more typical of industrially advanced affluent societies. undergoing a rapid structural change and reflect a poverty of serious values capable of sustaining the society and therefore, the individual. Rape, homicide, house-breaking drug-addiction and all forms of juvenile delinquency can be combated successfully only by stimulating the awareness of costructive values in

society. This can be done only by the inclusion of philosophy or critical thinking in the basic design of modern living. The pursuit of philosophy has the same value for successful living as the study of mathematics, physics, medicine or engineering. Even if a society cared only for the well-being of the body, assuming that the well being of the mind would automatically follow, this end would not be guaranteed by greater knowledge of the physical environment for that, by itself, does not lead to purification of the soul and the sick soul may destroy all benefits gathered by advancement of physical knowledge.

The second important step towards establishing a happier society would be to focus on the needs of the offender and the victim of crime strongly backed by scientific theories. In both the cases the needs raise the human rights issue. There has been a gross violation of human rights for both the parties each time a crime has taken place. Whereas there is usually little doubt regarding such violation in the case of the victim of crime, the case may not be so apparent with the offender. However, that the offender has developed the capacity to offend implies that society has denied him his rights to grow and function as an amicable and useful member of society. There is thus a need for evolving a broad system of social justice which will protect the rights not only of the possible and actual victims of crime, but also ensure to children and young persons their rights to grow up into happy adulthood. This concept of social justice for children and young people is consistent with the aims and objectives of the International Year of the Child as also with the U. N. Declaration of the rights of the child which recognized that the special needs of children and young persons do not arise only out of their right to develop properly in the physical sense. They also arise out of their needs to develop their full potential psychologically, intellectually, morally, socially, and culturally.

A third step would be to encourage and develop strategies designed to neutralize those socio-economic, bio-physical, and

emotional factors which might predispose children to juvenile delinquency and finally into the field of adult crime. There should not only be practical guidelines for already maladjusted people but planning for pervention of delinquency should become an integral part of educational planning. To make an effective planning possible the Sixth U. N. congress on the prevention of Crime and the Treatment of offenders held at Caracas, Venezuela in September 1980, assessed that the family, the educational system, the community, and the State, were, in order of priority, the institutions most intimately connected with the total situation and had the most influential role to play towards its betterment. Some of the important steps suggested were improvements in teaching environment, early identification programmes, differential treatment, strengthening the role of the family etc. Dr P. N. Grabosky of Law Department, Office of Crime Statistics, S. Australia has explained the growing rate of crime as due to simple population growth, unemployment, increase in opportunities to commit crime, affluence, breakdown of family, greater mobility, more anonymity, increased outdoor activities of women, exposure to media portrayals of violence, availability of instruments of violence, particularly firearms. As a remedial measure he would support annulment of all these conditions. Mr David Biles of Australian Institute of Criminology, has referred to long-term and life-imprisonment plus medical and psychiatric treatment of prisoners as some suggested fruitful ways of treatment of offenders. The joint paper of W. Clifford, Director of the Australian Institute of Criminology. Canberra, and S. Mukherjee presented to the Australian Discussion as paper Topic I at the Sixth U. N. Congress while retaining the idea of some kind of imprisonment for some forms of crime, condemns the insertion of electrodes into the brain for remote control of offenders and labels this strategy as defeat and not victory, commenting that there is no success in a game won with the opposition tied down. In their view close police-community



relations offer the best hope for crime-control. Although referring to Japan as being very successful in controlling crime. Particularly drug abuse, by means of campaigns through free media, they feel that very little is known about the role of media in generation and inhibition of crime to relate radio, T. V. or newspaper with them. If some are likely to imitate what they see or hear or read, there are others who do not. Yet they admit that the influence of the media is unmistakable.

The confusion over general/specific programmes, early identification schemes, dangers of labelling an individual, controversy over control and effectiveness of free media, effect of longterm imprisonment etc. can be ended only by extensive research on the laws of learning. While there has been much work on laws of learning, there is need of work which would (i) relate particular processes of *actual* learning with genetically determined and brain programmed capacities to learn and thus would make possible the elimination of undesirable behaviour and the establishment of possible learning of desirable behaviour through identification, termination, suppression, or culture and stimulation of available neuro-genetic data either by genetic engineering/gene culture, or by simple use of drugs and therapy ; (ii) relate particular processes of actual learning with environmental contact, thus facilitating the planning of possible learning through control of environment. This has to be done through experiments (on both animals and men of different age-groups) aimed at promoting understanding of 'learning through experience' ; (iii) demonstrate (through experiments again) how environment may lead to change in inheritable genetic pattern and neural pattern and again how such patterns may change the environmental field. This knowledge would be of immense value in determining (a) how far an individual is responsible for his behaviour, (b) how far he is capable to change and of transmitting the change and would therefore be of help in fixing up the guidelines of criminal justice in the areas of prevention of crime and treatment of offenders. Besides these theoretical

enquiries feeding on a nucleus of experiments, there should be projects which propose to set up concrete, specific programmes which would seek to demonstrate to children as well as to adults the value of family as an institution and way of life. Such programmes would be based upon direct evidence gathered from children deprived of family life in which either natural parents or natural parent-substitutes may care for them. Such case studies may be divided into the following groups

- (1) children brought up in communes from the beginning
- (2) children brought up first at home and then in communes,
- (3) children who spend a large part of their time in day care centres.
- (4) children who spend their time mostly at home in the company of mother/father/parent substitutes (like close blood relations) beyond regular school hours.

The testimony of the cases covered would be used to safeguard the interests and human rights of children. The U.N. Congress report had admitted that the normal family provided physical and emotional security for the child but it doubted if rights to happiness, affection and emotional security could be enforced by any State. But this is an acknowledgement of defeat, of the inability to solve the problem of crime. If the state could enforce monogamy, if it could have laws of inheritance, of imposing capital punishment or any imprisonment, then it should also be empowered to create and enforce conditions of family life productive of happy, law abiding children. For today's children are tomorrow's citizens. The adult world must come to terms with the fact that welfare of children could not be left at their grudging mercy. If maintenance of the family structure is productive of smiling children then the state has to see to it that adults behave responsibly after begetting children and meet the child's total needs by making family life possible and congenial. That which generates a crime is itself a crime and should be checked by the same measures as the crime itself, namely, by the imposition of suitable penalties. If necessary the society's attitudes towards sex and individuality should be scanned and revalued.

Programmes assessing values in terms of survival of individuals species would have to come in both critical, intellectual form and popular, pictorial form. The battle was fought for slaves, the battle was fought for women, and now the battle has to be fought for the children so that they are not pushed into the path of crime by hedonistic, unthinking adults.

## NON-SEXIST CAREER EDUCATION

*Susan Lenehan*

This paper will attempt to do three things—Firstly, to briefly analyse and discuss some recently published statistics and findings directly related to women's matriculation performance and career placement. Secondly, to provide an outline of resources and ideas which may be used in a Career Education Programme at Year 8 level. Finally, to discuss briefly the wider implications of a non-sexist Career Education Programme.

In a recently published *South Australian Education Gazette*, (September 26th, 1979), a breakdown of the "1978 Matriculation Subject Choice and the Performance of Boys and Girls," was presented under Table headings.

The first significant point to be noted is that in 1978, females comprised 53% of the total number of students enrolled, compared with 50% in 1977 and 48% in 1976. Several reasons probably exist for this increase. One is that with the decrease in some areas of "traditional female" occupations females have been kept on at school, in an attempt to enhance their chances of obtaining employment in other areas. Males, on the other hand, are more likely to undertake trade courses and to feed into some of the traditional male jobs which do not require matriculation.

In the area of subject choice, it is apparent that a strong

"sex" bias still occurs in choice of subjects. The only subjects which do not show a significant difference in the number of male and female students are Maths IS, Geography, Geology and American History.

Perhaps the most significant findings show up Matriculation Results, 1978'. Of the 19 subjects listed, females have very significantly, (I) out-performed males in three subjects—Art, English and Maths Is ; and have significantly, (II) displayed higher mean scores in five other subjects—Australian History, Biology, Geography, Maths I and Physics. Of the remaining 11 subjects the mean female score is higher than the mean male score in 6 subjects. Overall, the mean female score is better than the mean score in a total of 14 out of the 19 subjects.

TABLE I (Comparison between Mean Male and Female Scores)

	High level of significance of difference	Low level of significance of difference	Differences	Total
Female Mean Scores	3	5	6	14
Male Mean Scores	—	—	5	5
Total			11	19

subjects

If the mean of the differences between the mean female and male scores are calculated, it is seen that the mean difference between the 14 higher female-male scores is 132, while the mean difference between higher male-female scores is '05.

To summarise ; In the 1978 Matriculation Examination, 53% of the students enrolled were female. While still being concentrated more heavily in the Humanities/Language areas, female students performed significantly better overall than did males. It should be noted that the statistics quoted refer only to one

year's Matriculation results and are used simply to highlight the fact that many traditionally accepted beliefs are open to question.

I. At a significance level of .001

II. At a significance level of .05

The second area to be examined is the placement of females in the work force after leaving school or post-secondary full-time education. Tables showing this placement for both males and females have recently been published for the period 1964-1979, in the *Women and Work Newsletter*, Vol. 2, No. 3, August 1979. As shown 77.1% of employed females are in the sales, clerical and professional areas. At first glance the fact that 20.3% of employed females compared to 11.2% of employed males are in the Professional, Technical and Related Workers Group may seem significant. However, it must be noted that females within this group are concentrated in the nursing and teaching professions. As pointed out in the text, females are still concentrated in a small number of industries and occupations, compared to males. These recently published figures, certainly support Corich's (1978, 26) findings, that young women move into the work force with a very limited range of work options open to them. Corich further states that research has shown that schools, reinforced by family attitudes, continue to channel girls into developing traditional and home-oriented skills.

While recognising the critical problem of the effects of unemployment on the opportunities for women, it is not proposed to discuss this area as it is being covered in another Conference paper.

#### CAREER EDUCATION

Within the education system the widening of girl's perception in relation to career choice should, in my opinion, begin on entering school.

Within the high school situation a Career Education Programme should be on going, with a work experience programme occurring at either Year 10 or 11.

The following ideas and resources may prove useful in implementing a Career Education programme at Year 8 level.

The use of a short informal questionnaire (similar to that outlined in Attachment I), which can be given to students initially and then repeated at the end of the course, will indicate level of aspiration, personal opinions and awareness of issues such as the effects of technological change.

The publication, *Register of Women in Non-Traditional Occupations*, can be introduced to small groups of students, and points for discussion raised. Students, may be asked to select a number of occupations which they consider most non-traditional and describe the day to day work performed, as well as the qualifications and any special training required. At a subsequent lesson, each student can be asked to talk about one or more of the occupations they have chosen.

The Career Game, "Rite Staff", which is a game about the large range of occupations within organisations, can be played by groups of 8 students up to a total class group of 48. For students to fully understand and benefit from the game, it will need to be played at least three times. A more simple word association game, T. A. G., which aims to broaden a student's perception of situations and choices can also be played.

#### CONCLUSION

In concluding this paper, it seems appropriate to discuss within a wider context, the effectiveness of a Career Education Programme aimed at combatting sexism in career opportunities.

How effectively can a non-sexist Career Education Programme operate when the messages being received by students

from all sections of the media are reinforcing sex role stereotypes ?

Also, while it is obvious that women have the ability and resourcefulness to participate in the same range of occupations as men, in reality this does not happen.

The efforts of educators, particularly females, to counter sex role stereotyping in Career Education Programmes and in the placement of women in the work force, must be seen as only part of the total thrust to combat sexism in the society.

It seems to me, that the inequalities which women suffer in interpersonal relationships, within the family, in the workforce, in sport and within most institutions and organisations have a common factor—namely the socialization of people into fixed sex roles. While we may strive to combat the same result of this socialization process, we must also strive for a fundamental change in the way society socialises people.

In February 1964 there were 82,800 employed male school leavers and 63,300 employed female school leavers. These 146,100 persons made up 3·2 % of the employed work force.

In May 1979 there were 125,900 employed male school leavers and 92,500 employed female school-leavers. These 218,400 persons made up 3·6% of the employed workforce.

During the last 15 years the number of employed school-leavers has increased by 72,300 (49%).

Employed junior females are mainly in the sales, clerical and professional areas which includes nurses and training teachers. Females are concentrated also in a small number of industries. Unlike junior males who are employed in many occupations and industries, concentration of junior females in these occupations indicates the narrowness of their perception of the labour market. The Tables show that female school leavers continue to concentrate in these areas.



**APPENDIX**

- a. Make a list of several jobs you think you might like to do when you leave school.
- b. Now make a list of traditional female jobs. Discussion of the meaning of traditional and non-traditional will be necessary.
- c. Then make a list of traditional male jobs.
- d. Where do your job choices fit-under traditional female or traditional male jobs.
- e. What effects do you think "technology" will have on the jobs you have listed in (a).
- f. Does the question of unemployment concern you. Explain.

## SEXISM AND CLASSROOM INTERACTION

*Jozefa Sobski*

Classroom interaction has been the focus of much research into educational practice. It has also been the focus of considerable attention from those concerned with the ways in which teachers' perceptions of sex roles promote or retard the educational attainment and performance of children. It is not, of course, the only aspect of teaching which has been examined, but it is one which is regarded as of immense importance in the educational process.

Though sex roles have not been universally damned as undesirable by advocates of equality, their stereotyping, as with any stereotyping has been criticised as of limited educational usefulness and leading to the presentation or perpetuation of a distorted view of humanity and the qualities of character, ability and interest shared by men and women. Put in another way, sex role stereotyping tends to exaggerate sex differences and gives similarities little or no prominence.

Educators and others, concerned with issues of discrimination and in support of equality between the sexes, describe the social system, belief, custom, policy or practice which endorses stereotyping and the emphasis on difference, *as sexism*.

By inference, both from the definition and the general aims of those who oppose this system, a non-sexist education : stresses in-

dividual differences and recognises that within the sex, differences may be greater than between the sexes ; realises that boys and girls are not the same, but in any case have many human characteristics in common ; ensures that the range of learning opportunities in a school are made available to all students ; encourages and extends children's interests and abilities ; avoids behavioural expectations which are stereotyped and fosters the development and choices of children in the context of a reliable assessment of their aptitude and not on prejudiced and outmoded notions of the appropriate roles and interests of girls and boys, men and women.

R. R. Dale, who has written extensively on the subject of single-sex versus co-education, in one article on education and sex roles, concludes that :

Psychological sex differences are partly innate, partly acquired (no research, even the most comprehensive and definitive—the Maccoby and Jacklin study, can specify the balance). Interests, aptitudes and temperamental characteristics of the sexes overlap substantially ; individual differences are more important in education than sex differences.

*(Educational Review, Vol. 27, No. 3, June 1975, p. 240)*

Proponents of a non-sexist education are acutely aware that transferring this into classroom practice and interaction requires a high level of understanding and sympathy from teachers, the continuous scrutiny of lesson content, the curbing or modifying of stereotyped expectations of children and their behaviour, and a commitment to the provision of equal educational opportunities without the harbouring of even covert or unwitting prejudice.

Recognising sexist behaviour or attitudes is the first step towards transferring the principles of non-sexist education into classroom practice. Recent studies indicate that teachers have an "exciting" repertoire of sexist attitudes and expectations conveyed within and outside the classroom.

An Italian study by Elena Belotti yielded the following from primary and infant teachers in response to a question about differences between boys' and girls' school behaviour :

Boys are livelier, noisier, more aggressive and quarrelsome ; less disciplined, more disobedient, greater liars and lazier. They apply themselves less to their work, write less well and less quickly. They are more disorderly, dirtier and less intelligent. On the other hand, they are more independent, need affection, approbation and helpless ; are more self-confident, show greater solidarity with their own sex, have a great sense of friendship, aren't traitors, don't babble and cry less. Little girls are more docile, more servile, more dependent on the teacher's judgement, weaker in character. They cry and gossip more, are greater tattle-tales, show less solidarity with their own sex and are less gay. They are more intelligent, methodical and organised ; they apply themselves better ; take better care of their personal appearance ; are more obedient, obliging, loyal, careful and disciplined.

(*Little Girls*—Elena Giannini Belotti, London, 1975, p. 125.)

In a British study of perceptions of behavioural differences, it was revealed that secondary teachers regarded girls as :

...more mature, more interested in the opposite sex, more conformist and obedient. Boys were seen as restless, independent, noisy and careless...Boys' discipline problems were perceived of as the "boys will be boys" variety...Girls, however, were 'devious', 'insidious', 'insolent' and 'resentful'.

(*Educational Review*, Vol. 27, No. 3, June, 1975, p. 175.)

(Since teachers tolerate mischief, but dislike insolence, it could well be asked which came first, teacher preference for boys, or girls' display of resentment ?)

In their review of research into sex differences, Maccoby and Jacklin were extremely cautious in coming to too many conclusions from the hundreds of studies they assessed. Despite the

strongly asserted opinions conveyed to Belotti in the above, they found that only the following sex differences were fairly well established by the data they examined :

- \* That girls have greater verbal ability than boys. During the period from pre-school to adolescence, the sexes are similar in their verbal abilities. At about age 11, the sexes begin to diverge, with female superiority increasing through high school and possibly beyond.
- \* That boys excel in visual-spatial ability. Male superiority on visual-spatial tasks is fairly consistently found in adolescence and adulthood, but not in childhood.
- \* That boys excel in mathematical ability. The two sexes are similar in their early acquisition of quantitative concepts but from 12-13 years, boys' mathematical skills increase faster than girls'. The magnitude of the difference varies from one population to another.
- \* That boys are more aggressive, both physically and verbally.

Other differences observed were found to be primarily socially or culturally induced. Certain behaviour is expected from boys and girls and this behaviour is tolerated because of stereotyped preconceptions. If not discouraged, such behaviour as defiance, lying, dependence, servility and even aggression in children becomes an exaggerated part of their make-up. If girls seem to be more methodical and organised than boys, and this is valued by teachers, they must determine ways in which boys may also be motivated to develop such organisational skills. If docility and dependence are regarded as undesirable traits, then teachers should devise methods to demonstrate their harmfulness to children's personal growth and future social interactions. Tolerating or even condoning negative characteristics in children purely on the basis of a belief about what is appropriate to one sex or another is not sufficient reason to evade intervention—particularly if such behaviour proves dysfunctional in adulthood.

There is another dimension to the problem of sexism in the classroom which must be explored and elaborated before we may proceed to the relevance of all this to drama teachers and the questions which may be raised about drama teaching practice. This dimension relates to teachers' behaviour towards and treatment of boys and girls. A number of issues emerge from it.

First, do male teachers behave differently towards pupils from female teachers in comparable situations. Are there behavioural variations in treatment by teachers of girls as opposed to boys? Does the behaviour of the pupil vary in relation to the sex of the teachers. If there are differences (and most observers would immediately agree that there are) what is their significance, if any? (This will be examined without any particular consideration being given to the Pygmalion concept that claims children fulfil teachers' expectations and we have already sampled some of the stereotypes that shape people's thinking.)

Studies in this area of interaction are neither numerous nor conclusive and cannot be viewed as consistently reliable. Detailing their findings would require a much lengthier paper and a great deal of tedious analysis. It will be sufficient to make some *generalisations* from these findings (and of course, they raise the questions of which came first?)

One set of data indicate that classroom interaction patterns are largely determined by students not teachers. Teachers are primarily reactive to the differential pressures that boys and girls present. The teachers role as an authority figure, socialising boys and girls to conform to the student role defined by the school, is more important than the teachers' sex. Teachers themselves are socialised by the school which prescribes their function and places severe constraints on their behaviour irrespective of their sex.

Somewhat in opposition to this, are the reports that male teachers promote more male-type activities, are more aggressive and physical than female teachers, resist pressures to observe

standard classroom procedures and are more inclined towards permissive, child-centred educational approaches. They pay more attention to boys both in negative and positive ways and tend to ignore girls. That is, they discipline boys more severely as well as giving them greater encouragement.

Female teachers, on the other hand, are more disapproving of boys' behaviour, more supportive and positive in their treatment of girls and less sex-typed in their selection of activities for children. Female, infant teachers like boys whether they are aggressive or dependent, but intensely dislike aggressive and outspoken girls. In another study, teachers were much more supportive of girls who were socially inept than boys.

In all studies, boys are described as receiving the major proportion of teachers' time and attention whether it is to be approved or disapproved of. They are more frequently punished than girls because they are more likely to resist rules which run counter to the notions they have of appropriate behaviour for boys. (P. Waugh's study of referral patterns in counselling.) Disapproval from teachers is earned for everything from violation of rules, to unpleasant behaviour or thoughtlessness, lack of knowledge or skill to lack of attention.

Girls receive far less attention from teachers. Girls conform because they are pre-disposed, through earlier conditioning to yield to the constraints of the school environment and are thus also likely to receive more approbation and reward from teachers.

In their views of school, boys are negative and girls more neutral or even positive,

(Patrick, C. Lee, "Male and Female Teachers in Elementary Schools : An Ecological Analysis", *Teachers College Record*. Vol. 75, No. 1, September, 1973.

Thomas L. Good, et al, "Effects of Teacher Sex and Student sex on Classroom Interaction", *Journal of Educational Psychology*, Vol. 65, No. 1, August, 1973.

Lynn Davies and Roland Meighan. "A Review of Schooling and Sex Roles, with Particular Reference to the Experience of Girls in

Secondary Schools. *Educational Review*, Vol. 27, No. 3, June, 1975. )

My own observations, and those of many teachers I have discussed the issue with, support these to some extent and go a little further. Disruptive, irritating and raucous behaviour from boys is tolerated and even anticipated by all teachers whereas girls' behaving in a similar fashion would be dealt with severely and any discipline would be couched in innuendo both sexual and related to notions of what is "lady-like."

Many teachers complain that boys show little respect for females in authority. This problem is ironically then passed for solution to a male in authority.

Conversely, it has often been observed that both male and female teachers discipline or criticise boys in harsh and angry tones, far more so than when disciplining girls. Corporal punishment is a physical manifestation—though often it is praised as a swift and emotionally non-coercive disciplinary weapon as well as being berated as medieval.

With respect to other classroom dynamics, boys dominate verbally, intimidate girls, satirise their behaviour, engage in ridicule and are generally more extraverted. Girls listen passively, interact more often with each other than the teacher and are more wary of or deferential to authority figures.

None of this analyses the incompatibility or conflict between the institutional conformity demanded by schools and their aim to develop autonomous individuals. It does little to illuminate this complex question or question about class or socio-economic status and ethnicity and the way these factors interact in the classroom. That is because, few large scale psychological or sociological studies have been conducted into these questions in Australia although writers assert that schools perpetuate inequalities existing in society.

While the generalisations about classroom behaviour do not answer satisfactorily the questions posed earlier, they do provide us with some basis for evaluating whether we reinforce or



challenge unnecessary sex differences through our teaching practises. Whether we have stereotypes in our minds when dealing with boys and girls, stereotypes similar to some described at the beginning of this paper. How much do we convey to children through our unconscious behaviour and expectations, thus perpetuating some undesirable cycles of behaviour in both boys and girls ?

Drama teaching (and I interpret drama in the broad sense of a set of skills or an activity or a staged experience, rather than in only the narrow sense of theatre) has as some of its aims, to aid children in their social development, extend their awareness and understanding of attitudes, values and behaviour, assist them to explore ideas, nurture their creativity and imagination, help them to understand themselves and so on. It also aims to teach them something about the power of language and gesture and the balance of power in human interaction. As such, it can play a constructive role, through the use of a variety of techniques at its disposal, in enriching children's view of their potential and the repertoire of behaviour and interaction on which they may draw confidently.

As an amateur in this area, I do not have a comprehensive programme designed but the following questions may provoke people to conceive some solutions. There is of course a distinction to be made between the drama lesson and the activities involved in a full-scale production, Whether it is the one or the other, the following may be useful :

- \* to what extent are the opinionated extraverts chosen for drama activity while the timid and retiring are ignored ? Do you type-cast ?
- \* Do you organise activities for those less confident and able ?
- \* Is a vocal group within the class always given the opportunity to dominate air time because encouraging others is too time-consuming or problem-ridden ?
- \* Are boys assumed to be leaders in all situations ?

- \* Are girls expected to play nurturant, long-suffering, quiescent roles ?
- \* Do boys as well as girls express a range of emotions such as anxiety, fear, awe, distress, grief, love, warmth, passion and so on in the roles they are asked to play ?
- \* Is sensitivity rather than brashness urged in the performance of boys ?
- \* Is friendship between the sexes portrayed as consisting of something more than sexual interest or leading to something additional to sexual activity ?
- \* Are authority figures always male ?
- \* Is aggression permitted only as a male response to an incident ?
- \* Is loyalty regarded as a primarily female trait ?
- \* Are girls often requested to play leadership roles ?
- \* Are cominal roles reserved for boys ?
- \* In socio-drama, is family, school, or peer-group conflict or confrontation, based on a stereo-typed assumption about the composition of those units ?
- \* Are children's choice of roles or activities deciding factors for teachers' choices ?
- \* Is physical contact during a drama activity encouraged among boys, but discouraged among girls of mixed-sex groups ?
- \* Are sex role reversals usually treated as comical events rather than as serious attempts to explore behaviour ?
- \* Is interaction—verbal—between the sexes avoided because it often leads to 'real' conflict ?
- \* Is attractive appearance in girls used as a criterion for selection in classical drama activity ?
- \* Does the staging of a school production engage girls and boys in stereotyped tasks ? For example, boys erecting and decorating sets, girls designing and making up costumes as well as making-up principals and cast during performance ?
- \* Is power viewed only in terms of physical strength, tone or loudness of voice, or are other forms of power examined through drama activity ?
- \* Are we aware of sex stereotypes and questioning them through all aspects of our drama teaching ?

## **'GROWING UP IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY'**

*Jozefa Sobski*

The Social Development Unit was established in the Ministry of Education in 1977. At the time of its establishment, the Minister indicated that the Unit would be concerned with "the educational implications which arise from the Government's policies in the fields of anti-discrimination, sexism and ethnic affairs." He indicated that these policies had been developed to respond to changes in society, in its ethnic composition and in the expanded role which women are playing. Since then, Unit officers have been involved across the portfolio, examining the implications of the two central concerns of providing a non-sexist education and an education appropriate to a multicultural society.

Unit officers have become increasingly aware that in the implementation of Government initiatives and in society at large, there is conflict inherent in the implementations of these two policy concerns. The provision of a non-sexist educational environment which fosters equality of opportunity and encourages the involvement of women and girls in the decision-making process, may not complement other initiatives which seek to foster ethnic diversity and provide an educational environment where the maintenance of ethnic values is fostered.

It has become apparent that this situation is particularly marked when one considers the experiences of girls of ethnic background within the secondary school situation. However, workers in the field had for a long time to rely on smatterings of anecdotal evidence, particularly from teachers, counsellors and mistresses-in-charge of girls in schools of high migrant density. No first-hand systematised information was available which documented the culture clash of these girls.

Subsequently, the Social Development Unit in 1979 undertook a research study which sought to document the experiences of girls of ethnic origin, particularly in so far as clashes occurred between their aspirations as women in Australian society and their membership of a particular ethnic group within that society. The results of this study will be published shortly.

Adolescent      Female      Immigrant      *Points of Conflict*  
    —Life style—Sex Roles  
    —work Roles —view of  
    Education

#### PROBLEMS IN COMMON WITH AUSTRALIAN GIRLS

(a) Low self-esteem and confidence leading to depression, low motivation, irritability, erratic or unpredictable behaviour, little social competence in mixed sex groups and even over-reaction to criticism.

(see Connel et al. *12 to 20 Studies of City Youth*, Sydney, 1975, Chapter 3)

(b) Ill-advised subject choices because often parents and even teachers are not conscious of the implications of certain subject choices. The Williams Report makes direct reference to this in its section on female unemployment.

The choice of subjects at secondary schools can have a very important effect on the immediate job opportunities for school leavers and on decisions about the length of schooling.

(Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Education and Training ; *Education Training and Employment*, Vol I, February, 1975, P. 658).

(c) Low and narrow parental expectation of their daughters' education and future. Sinclair's study of the occupational choices of Sydney teenagers (*Australian Journal of Education*, March 1979) indicated that parents have very traditional views of appropriate careers or occupations for their daughters. On the other hand, in the recent report of the Schools Commission, *Parents say*, parents rejected the suggestion that they held differing aspirations for their daughters compared with their sons. Nevertheless, although they felt girls ought to get as much education and training as they were capable of attaining, they viewed marriage as the ultimate career for a girl and the other as an insurance policy against the breakdown of support from a male breadwinner. One immigrant girl remarked : "that's what a woman is. If you don't do that people think you're not a woman."

(d) Sex division of labour at home often very burdensome for daughters where the mother is employed outside the home.

(e) Poor understanding and appreciation of female life pattern in contemporary Australia which contributes to a view that child-bearing is a permanent occupation from puberty to old age. Now this may be the pattern for some women, but it is certainly not the pattern for all women. Factors which are often over-looked include, the completed family contains an average of 2.5 children. Women's child-bearing is concluded by age 30. There is a high return to work rate among women. Some women are choosing to return to study.

(f) Problems of obesity due to bad eating habits and ignorance of nutrition. This may be described as a problem shared by all advanced technological societies. However, because of the greater amounts of fatty tissue in females, they have a greater propensity to becoming overweight. Since many studies, including Connell's claim that girls' self-esteem is partly related to

how highly they regard their personal appearance and the two in fact feed each other, this is an important area for consideration and action. Dr. Brian Quigley in Queensland recently received funding to conduct a study into the area.

(g) Expectation that economic support will be provided by a male over a lifetime. The unemployment situation and the high rate of divorce must, at least, cast serious doubt on such a belief.

(h) Rejection of tertiary training as inappropriate and unnecessary for a girl whose major career will be that of homemaker and mother. There are socio-economic differences in the expression of this attitude, but there is little doubt that many able girls leave school for low paid jobs offering little advancement without giving any thought to the advantages of diversification. The absence of girls in trade training, where there is presently a shortage of qualified people is to be regretted. In a survey conducted in 1973-4, 73% of females had no post-school qualifications, compared with 64.25% of males and only . % of females had trade qualifications, compared with 18.4% of males. Figures from the Department of TAFE compiled more recently on enrolments in courses do not indicate any significant alteration of this situation.

#### PROBLEMS ADDITIONAL TO THOSE OF AUSTRALIAN GIRLS DUE TO CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

(a) Due to strong family affiliation the individual's (in this case, the girl's) interests, desires, aspirations, must often be subordinated and appropriately modified to fit in with the family's wishes. Girls who choose to marry, or simply associate with someone outside the ethnic group to which they belong may suffer enormous pressures to conform. Similarly, where a girl's educational aspirations conflict with those of her family's there is pressure for those to be altered in line with family feeling.

(b) Because adolescence, among many immigrant groups, is not regarded as a separate and delicate period, in the development of the child, fraught with trauma and anxiety many problems (appearance, sexuality, identity) suffered during this period, leading to conflict with parents, are interpreted merely as rebelliousness able to be disciplined out of the system. Resolution of these problems is therefore more difficult for the immigrant girl.

(c) A commitment to a religious code and the limitations this places on woman's role will often conflict with the girl's desire for acceptance by the peer group. Lack of conformity to the clothing habits, social activities and life-style of Australians could mean ostracism for the girl and consequent depression or some other manifestation of disaffection.

(d) Little social life permissible outside the family sphere. (This relates to (a)). An Australian peer group would find this difficult to comprehend and in some cases quite unacceptable. This could be viewed as overprotection and even an inability on the part of the girl to assert her independence of the family.

(e) In the majority of cases male companions are chosen and approved of by his parents, usually by the father. This practice may be contrasted with the generally more laissez-faire attitude found in Australian families.

(f) Boys are regarded as superior to girls in the family and are accorded greater rights and freedom. Independence in boys is encouraged while girls are restricted and protected. This may lead to a girl suffering from general lack of social confidence in many situations outside the family and result in diffidence in school and so on.

(g) In some immigrant families, there is considerable pressure for the children to be high achievers at school. This is supported by the recent findings of Dr. Jean Martin in her study of 3,000 Sydney High School students. (Reported in the *Age* 8. 6. 79). Although that report stresses that differences among immigrants are very great, it confirms that despite a low level

of performance as the school assesses it, immigrant children cling to high aspirations.

The pressure to achieve may be applied irrespective of the advice of teachers as to the stress caused in the child. Such a situation must be understood in the context of feelings of isolation, alienation and even inferiority engendered in immigrants from their experience of the Australian community. These factors, together with a determination to secure the future, causes immigrants to place a high value on traditionally valued accreditation through education. The deficits of background must be compensated for.

#### SOME EXAMPLES OF CONFLICT ENCOUNTERED AT SCHOOL DUE TO CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

- (a) Girl required to perform *home duties*. No priority given to essential study or homework. May be additionally burdened by other working. (49·1% married women born outside Australia are in the labour force as compared to only 40·1% of Australian born females). (1978)
- (b) Girl not permitted to participate in school *excursions* because of the curfew normally applied to girls after dark or when travelling on their own or with a group other than family.
- (c) Discussion of *sexual matters* which may occur in a P. D. course may be regarded with suspicion and often resented as interference in areas regarded as the family's responsibility.
- (d) Strict *discipline* enforced by parents often accompanied by severe corporal punishment contrasted with attitude of most teachers in schools. The school may therefore be regarded as too permissive by parents.
- (e) *Double standard* or different standard applied to the behaviour of sons from that of daughters. This is reinforced by teachers often quite unconsciously who express shock and dismay at unladylike behaviour.



(f) *Language difficulties* manifested in a variety of ways, from poor or erroneous comprehension, to lack of interest or enthusiasm for work, to withdrawal from any discussion etc. Immigrant culture and language must be accorded respect and recognition in the school. Values, which tend to reinforce prejudice or discrimination and which are therefore harmful to good relations in the school community, must be challenged.

The cultural variety of immigrant communities is a source of enriching an imaginative school programme. It must not, however, be the source of enslaving girls to a narrow or erroneous view of their future lives.

Parents must be educated to realise that the school is teaching children who will be the adults of thirty years hence and must be aware of what implies in terms of social and technological change.

The school must ease the transition from one culture to the multicultural Australian community. It must assist children and their parents at points of crisis by whatever means it has at its disposal.

AUSTRALIAN WOMENS EDUCATION COALITION CONFERENCE—  
NOVEMBER 1979

*Definition of Terms*

SEXISM : 1. A term used to identify a *belief* that the human sexes fall into distinct, different and opposite psychological and sociological groups in addition to their biological ones and that their life pattern and behaviour is, therefore, largely predetermined at birth (sometimes described as a SEX ROLE).

2. A social system which is based on this belief and in which benefits, privileges, authority and disadvantages are distributed on the basis of sex without adequate regard to individual differences in capability, personality, experience, background and qualifications.

3. Any system which assigns men to a primary status and relegates women to a secondary status in society.

4. A practice which defines the spheres of action of the sexes as separate and different and which is enforced by customs, expectations and assumptions based on the belief in (1).

5. Discrimination against the sexes which has harmful consequences and is based on the belief in (1).

**SEXIST :** An adjective applied to attitudes, behaviour, practices and systems which are based on the belief in (1).

**NON-SEXIST :** An adjective applied to attitudes, behaviour, practices and system which accept individual differences in personality and capability and are opposed to the rigid definition and imposition of sex roles.

**COUNTER-SEXIST :** An adjective applied to behaviour, practices and systems which are designed to counteract sexism as a belief, social system, practice or discrimination.

## **FUNCTIONS OF THE FAMILY**

*Lee Comer*

The pressure of the family is so pervasive that people outside it—spinsters, bachelors, unmarried mothers, the divorced and gay people—symbolise either deviancy, personal failure or abnormality. It is because the family is the only sanctioned unit for living that everything which in any way threatens it takes on the proportions of a serious 'social problem'—that is, free contraception, 'promiscuity', abortion, illegitimacy, broken homes and homosexuality. All these threaten the stability and indeed, the inflexibility of family life.

It's vitally important to capitalism that we should all be hooked on the dream of happy families. It is actually a visual dream, projected in the advertisements and in children's story books, giving everyone an instant, composite, packaged dream of the 'average' (ideal) family. It's a handsome, briefcase-carrying man, a smiling aproned woman, (usually pictured serving food), a bright boy of about 8 and a sweet girl of 6, all living together with the assortment of consumer aids to easy living. There are no old people, no cross words, no illness, no poverty, and no rain and no-one ever grows any older. It's a static dream to cherish which is never quite fantasy because it's always around the corner or somebody else has it.

We live in two families—the one we are born into and the one we make. The period when the second family is together is the shortest period in the whole family cycle, but it is the one by which the rest is measured. If we see the whole cycle as a film with a beginning a middle and an end, we can see that the time when parents and children are living together has been caught in a static frame and blown up out of all proportion, and is so projected as to de-signify the rest of the film. So it is that the family unit is the peak of the pyramid of the social hierarchy against which individual lives appear as one long 'before and after'. It is against this that the following strutting facts fit into place. Less than one quarter of the country's households contain dependent children and 40% of the next generation are growing up in only 9 of all households. To put it another way, in one individual life span of 70 years, less than half of those years will be spent in an intact family unit.

On the face of it, organisation of people on a mass scale into small, privatised units appears natural, inevitable, convenient and desirable. It also seems as though we are not pressured into the family but that, like measles or flu, families just happen to people. So we use terms like 'fall in love' and then, like night after day, children 'come along'. In fact, one chooses to live within the sanctioned unit as adults, because one would otherwise have to make what appears to be a negative choice—that is, not to fall in love, not to try and buy a house and not to have children. What this means is that we do not choose the family; we are taken by the hand and firmly led into it. Because the nuclear family performs essential functions for capitalism which other social groupings would not do, it's imperative that we remain hooked on the dream and ignorant or suspicious of its alternatives.

If the family is the backbone of society (capitalism), as its defenders so fondly tell us, then institutionalised monogamy is the spinal cord. Instead of women and men relating freely together—and women with women and men with men—we have the one woman/one man principle which pressures two people into marriage at the first inkling of affection and later persuades

them to breed and to love each other through thick and thin and, if not, then at least to carry on living together so that one woman and one man come to symbolise not two autonomous people but a joint institution. This institution is a fundamental form of social control. In other words, marriage makes men into breadwinners and women into wives and mothers. It imposes on women and men functions which are in no sense natural to them but which act entirely in the interests of the system.

It is clear that marriage is the first and basic model of the division of labour and power between the sexes, the legalised sanction whereby society justifies the public separation of men from women by throwing them together in private. Marriage contains the gross economic, social and sexual inequalities between men and women. It removes the struggle that women perpetually wage against male authority to an apparently safe and insignificant place—the home. This struggle has always been assumed not to exist merely because it takes place without spectators, and does not trouble the outside world. But it's there wherever we care to look—in the domestic row, in the woman's silent hurts, the wells of resentment at male privilege and economic control, the bitterness at the loss of female autonomy, the slammed door and the not uncommon fear of violence. These are the cracks in every marriage structure which romantic love merely papers over.

The bridge that marriage constructs across the sexes is an illusion which most of us are constrained to enact as reality. By disguising the division between the sexes, which this society perpetuates and profits from (e.g. the degradation of women as sex objects), it reinforces the apartheid of public life and removes the battle ground from the public to the private domain. Our personal lives may be disrupted by it and in many cases, utterly destroyed, but all the while the wheels of capitalism turn smoothly and indifferently. As long as men and women quarrel in private or submerge their differences in silence, while maintaining a married face to the outside world, the chasm between women and men will continue to serve the society that created it.

The family hinges on monogamy as capitalism hinges on the family. In fact, throughout the world, the growth of capitalism has ushered in the nuclear family, leaving in its wake devastated tribal and clan systems. A sociologist of the family noted, in a cross cultural study, that :

in all parts of the world and for the first time in world history all social systems are moving fast or slowly toward some form of the conjugal family system and also toward industrialisation.

It is no accident. One of the first requirements of a capitalist economy is a mobile, social workforce—that is men and women who are willing to learn skills and sell their labour wherever they are needed, and this they cannot do if they are tied, either emotionally or physically, to a larger family or community net-work. That the extended family is now nothing more than a quaint anachronism, surviving in a few depressed pockets of industrial society is an indication of how effective capitalism is when it invades what we regard as the personal domain.

The arrangements most suited to serve the interests of the system are those most people are forced to make, so that what a worker travels with is that which will keep him happy, fed, clothed, rewarded for his labours, work-fixated, satisfied and perpetuated, i.e. wife and children. (Too many single men and women, without the much valued stabilising influence of a home and family, who are free to go on strike more easily, are an obvious threat to the economic system). So the best arrangement a man can make, regardless of his class or education, is to :

- 1 take a wife who will care for him and see to all his needs and bear and rear his children.
- 2 live with them in a small, isolated group, preferably away from his first family, with whom his links must be only nominal (aged parents are a liability)
- 3 be intent on maintaining or improving his standard of

living, thereby committing himself to overtime or professional ladder climbing, both of which require long hours away from home and a patient, uncomplaining wife.

- 4 be prepared to move house from time to time (in pursuit of higher paid work, or to move to areas of unemployment to industrial areas) but not to strike.
- 5 support a wife and growing family.

The woman's arrangements must parallel her husband's. But, as well as applying herself to long, unpaid hours of work in the home, seeing to her husband's and children's needs, she must also be prepared to work outside the home for 'pin' money (low pay), but not to identify with her work role. She must see her job as something to do when the children grow up. Her work must not give her privileges or independence, because her husband's mobility, which is so vital, depends on her dependence on him. Where he goes so must she. So that, if she is laid off at work or subjected to terrible working conditions and pay, it will not affect her docility. Thus two basic needs of capitalism are met. The family gives it a mobile docile workforce and a secondary, casual workforce.

Most of the functions of the nuclear family hinge directly on the woman's role. We are told, for instance, that the family serves to contain the workers' discontents and alienation. In simple terms, it means that the industrial worker can punch his wife but not his boss. The sociologists have been busy documenting the problem of the industrial worker's alienation for a long time. Here, for instance, is one typical statement :

At lower job levels the worker experiences little intrinsic job satisfaction; at higher levels he obtains more job satisfaction but is also subject to rather greater demands. At any level, the enterprise has to responsibility for the emotional input-output balance of the individual ; this is solely the responsibility of the family,

in the sense that there is nowhere else for it to go. The small family then, deals with the problem which the industrial cannot handle.

It's not the family which deals with the 'problem' it's the woman in the family. But there is a gross oversight. It is assumed that only men work and only men experience work alienation. What is conveniently forgotten is that two thirds of married women go out to work and most of them work in conditions equally as appalling as men's for less pay, but who is there to siphon off their work discontents. Who is there to cook the women's meals, clean her house, put her children to bed, wash her clothes and smooth her brow. Who tries to get home before she does so that the place will be warm and welcoming for her.

It is women who represent the refuge from work, who attend to the worker's—i.e. the husband's—psychological, sexual and physical well-being and who recharge his batteries so that he can continue to be exploited at work.

The function of the family which remains dominant is its child rearing purpose. I do not have to point out that, here again, it is not the family's function but the woman's. If her husband helps it is his choice but, with the way our lives are structured, even the best intentioned man will find it hard to take a constructive hand in child rearing when he must be away from the home for upwards of 40 hours a week. Whether women work outside the house or not, they must take responsibility for and, in most cases, the bulk of the physical work of child care. What I want to stress here is that child rearing function of the family is nothing more or less than a vehicle of love and nurturance—a tiny enclave of love and caring in a sea of materialism. What is forgotten is that the old (like children) need loving care and attention. But the nuclear family, being tailored to suit the needs of a capitalist economy, has no space or time for those whose productive usefulness is exhausted.



Where once the family was a defensive unit, with able-bodied men and women working to support the dependent young, old and sick, it is now a unit wholly concerned with the consumption and reproduction. The old are rejected because they cannot make economic contributions to society; the family must be pared down to include only those whom society can use. Knowing this we are still shocked by the conditions in which many old people live—when starvation drives them to choke to death trying to eat cardboard, or when they've been left to die alone in their homes and their bodies are not discovered for weeks. And the judges at their inquests say that such things shouldn't happen in a civilised society.

It was found that a hundred years ago, when capitalism was still struggling to co-exist with traditional family patterns, 80 percent of old people lived with their kin. Now the figure is nearer 10 percent and the remaining 90 percent are left to live out their days in poverty, in institutions and in geriatric wards of hospitals. Many are also vegetating in mental homes, though it is known that their only complaint is age and 'uselessness'.

While the dependent old represent a burden, the dependent young are an asset. They represent the future labour force, so that time, money and effort spent on them is not wasted as it would be on the old. I maintain that children are not only reared in the family, they are stamped, labelled, educated and graded, first by reference to their genitals, then by reference to their class and then by reference to their 'intelligence.' To keep the system going (and the profits flowing), we need businessmen, bankers, scientists, technologists and academics *and*, to keep them in businesses, we need an army of men to mine their coal, assemble cars, build roads, forge steel *and*, to keep *them* going, we need an auxiliary army of women to work the service industries *and*, to support the whole unwieldy edifice, we need those same women to care for the children, shop, cook, wash, sweep floors and make beds. The family is capitalism's appointed agent for producing the kind of adults the system needs.

It is within the family that the child learns what has been described as its 'role obligations', and where, also, inappropriate values, expectations and behaviour will be screened out. The young girl who wants to be a vet, ballet dancer or doctor will be discouraged by her parents who, though they do not like it, must nevertheless act on the behalf of the capitalist system. Society only needs a handful of vets and ballet dancers, but it takes an awful lot of women whose life work is caring for men and children, with only the odd stop-gap job in between.

Perhaps the most vital function of the family under capitalism is its economic one. The family consumes. It is, at one and the same time, the dumping ground for over-production and the pivot of the capitalist machine. The system demands that each family barricades itself—in a small house or flat, in order to fill it with consumer goods. We have only to look at a tower block of flats with 80 homes, each one of which will have its washing machine, hoover, television set, iron, private kitchen with assorted gadgets. Now we have the technology to collectivise and eradicate most of the menial tasks which each woman in each flat performs in isolation from each other. We have a technology for a shute in each flat which would carry everyone's dirty washing to a central automated area in the basement which would wash, dry, air and iron those clothes and return them. But the market for 80 washing machines, dryers, irons and ironing boards is eliminated at one blow, and also is the alienated labour of the woman, standing mindlessly over the machine which is supposedly able to ease her labour. The profit system guarantees that 80 families will buy a washing machine in order for each one to stand idle for 90 percent of its time.

And here again, it is the woman who is the prime target of advertising and consumer bombardment and who is asked to try and resolve the impossible contradictions in her role within the family by succumbing to commercial pressure. The family acts, then, as a multiplicity of isolated consumption units and

provides capitalism with an almost inexhaustible market, guaranteeing wasteful production, alienated labour and profits.

It is women, more than men, who are both the victims and the casualties of this, because they are locked at the base of every family upholding it and exploited and oppressed by it.

# **WOMEN IN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA**

*Leela Damodara Menon*

Industrialisation had brought multidimensional economic growth during the last five decades in developed nations and given their people life sustenance, choice of work and self-respect. In developing countries the loud cry has already risen "Industrialise or perish". In this context, it is very significant that the Lima Conference and plan of action call for creation of conditions for full integration of women in an organised manner in the industrial process. The assumption is that only when women are liberated from servitude can a nation awaken fully to economic stability. The International Women's Year had already given a clarion call for the full integration of women in development. Representatives of various nations realistically appraising the problems and capabilities of women all over the world, can help in evolving a new methodology for women's full employment.

## **EARLY ECONOMIC ACTIVITY**

Women have always worked and they continue to work indeterminate hours doing household jobs which is considered a labour of love, a return for security and a share of responsibilities as mother. From very early ages, they have sometimes

also taken up outside their homes, the work left-over by men, in agriculture, spinning, handicrafts and similar home industries. This might have been a rough division of labour when community life started, It is also the beginning of discrimination. As it worked out, these efforts did not give women security of service, proper wages or status of the economically independent. While solving crucial economic issues, it has now become necessary to have a fresh look at gainful employment for women, specifically promoting awareness of woman's place in national progress in equal partnership with man.

#### INDIAN ATTITUDE TO WOMEN

There is a great paradox in the attitude of Indian Society towards women. Cosmic Energy has been deified as Shakti and symbolised and worshipped as the Spouse of the Lord of Universe. The mother is venerated. The wife is 'patni' in the Hindu Shastras, the husband's full-fledged companion. It is also stated that in Vedic times, Indian women had enjoyed equality in all spheres. Yet as far as known, through centuries, woman has been functioning totally subservient to the father, the husband and son and not allowed any freedom of her own.

#### NEW TRENDS

Society in India is at present going through a period of transition due to a national planned development programme and influence of modernisation. As elsewhere, the Indian male is unable to abrogate to himself the responsibility of fully financing his family's needs. Planners also realise that successful economic changes will depend on the productive endeavour of all people, women inclusive. Women have therefore to take new postures to get employment, overcoming discriminatory practices of which they themselves are now aware. Both sexes have contributed to these discriminations and inequalities, directly and indirectly and are called upon now to solve the

problems together.

#### \*CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

Indian Women's courageous and outstanding contribution in the national struggle for Independence took them automatically to the status of equality at the dawn of freedom. The Constitution of India guarantees women's equality of status and opportunity, equal rights for adequate means of livelihood, and protection against discriminatory practices. Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the Indian Nation, struck the right note when he said "woman is man's better half. As long as woman has not the same rights in law as man, as long as the birth of a girl does not receive the same welcome as that of a boy, so long we shall know that India is suffering from partial paralysis." Relief has to be found from this paralysis.

#### TRADITIONAL BOTTLENECKS

General education for women has already opened up new vistas of employment in medical, teaching, clerical and factory sectors. But the percentage of women so engaged is small and the gap is very wide between legal rights and existing realities. Marriage is the main career for a woman. She is thus immobilised and she confines her activity around her home. Lack of skills, tradition, social taboos and submissiveness of woman herself are her main weaknesses. In rural India, even today, a woman's economic status is not determined by the wage she earns but by her husband and her family's status. When there is acute general unemployment in India, it is natural that promotion of women's employment is considered as snatching employment chances from men. This is one reason for the low percentage of working women.

#### PRESENT AREAS OF EMPLOYMENT

89% of the 273 million Indian women live in rural areas.

Women labour force is only 31·3 million. Of them, 80% are engaged in agriculture, 10·5% in industries and 9·5% in tertiary services. In urban area, rigid social barriers are absent and women work in more diversified sectors. The job umbrella of the educated employed women is interesting. There are certain jobs considered women's special preserves. 75% are teachers, the majority of whom are in primary schools. The rest includes typists and stenographers, nurses, physicians and others. 3% constitute administrators, businesswomen, managers, scientists, technicians, engineers and lawyers. From this category have emerged a woman Prime Minister, Cabinet and State Ministers, Ambassadors, Governors, High Court Judges and Executives. The disability for getting into the Indian Administrative Service and some other services (except in some departments of the Military) by married women had also been removed. All-woman Banks, All-woman Police Stations, All-woman Post Offices are introduced to show that Indian women can rise to good levels of competence. But in privileged jobs, the upward mobility for women is extremely difficult.

It is a very disappointing factor that only 13·3% of female population of India has been recorded as "Working population" in the sense that their efforts are socially and economically productive. In industries in the public and private sectors just 10·5% employed are women and only 1% are in the managerial posts, 48% are in very unskilled lower categories in industry. Some of them are paid less wages than even agricultural workers. In Central Government employment, where there is no discrimination between men and women in wages, women constitute 2·5%.

#### IMPACT OF PROTECTIVE LEGISLATION

A number of protective labour laws have been passed in favour of women, like maternity benefits, inheritance rights and factory acts and even the much talked of enactment for equal remuneration. But so far, these legal powers have not

helped to save women from exploitation and discrimination. They have only curtailed off some of the grim realities.

#### DISPLACEMENT IN TRADITIONAL AND HOUSEHOLD INDUSTRIES

Due to a slight increase in women's education, the number of women working in the administrative and other white collar jobs is on the increase. But many educated women are idle and economically inactive. Yet another factor which cannot be overlooked is that in agriculture as well as in some informal and formal industrial sectors, there has been a massive and alarming decline in the percentage of women workers. This trend is dangerous and shows that modern agriculture, industry and trade services are keeping out more and more women due to their lack of understanding of complex professional skills and marketing systems that have come in these sectors of late and because of which women cannot manage to work as they did.

#### NEW PROGRAMME

The existing plans for employment of women are found to be very inadequate. But there is a bright silver lining on the horizon. To arrest the trend of increasing displacements, a national policy decision has been taken to make in the Sixth plan a special provision to enlarge the scope of employment opportunities for women. The plan for accelerated rural industrialisation also will help this policy. The target is to be kept at 25% of the female population brought into productive endeavour for 1980 as against 13.3% now. Even this will be only reaching a position that prevailed 15 years ago, in spite of the fact that more job avenues had opened up for women during these years. There is some loud thinking about reserving a certain percentage of places for female workers in most industrial and other establishments. These objectives added with projects for greater health and literacy facilities to



women could trigger off the movement of women's true liberation.

#### SELF-EMPLOYMENT

Only a thorough overhauling change in the economic pattern of society and creation of further avenues of mass employment can thaw a difficult and frozen situation. Employment presupposes economic activity and when men are also in the throes of unemployment, unless there is visible increase in employment opportunities, it could lead to further confrontation between man and woman or at best, a status quo. The employment policy includes both wage and self-employment parameters and any policy for women's employment has to fit within this frame-work. It is in wage or self-employment programmes of the unorganised sector that the clue lies for women's first phase of industrialisation.

Reviewing the overall situation in India, selfemployment along with rural industrialisation seem to be the main answer for more employment for women. While maintaining at the national level the steady increase in production in the hard core industries, the diffusion of industrialisation can be real and general only if it came to rural areas and if there is feed back from the rural sector. In two ways this helps women. It brings the work round the corner to them or to their own homes. The sophistication and high finances necessary to heavy and large industries are not called for. Nor long training in skills. The process is thus simplified.

Self-employment programmes for women will be an exciting adventure and a breakthrough. It is a difficult beginning but a rewarding goal. To mobilise economically weak women with no training, bargaining power or money is not easy. But it is not impossible. One thing is already clear. The Indian woman may be poor, illiterate, but with the right guidance she has shown that she can do well.

Properly trained and organised, women in India can really become very efficient, economically independent groups. This is seen from the exciting story of a group of 6,667 women workers in Ahmedabad engaged as garment-makers, hand cart pullers, vegetable vendors and junk smiths, who were brought together and thus saved from exploitation by money lenders and big traders. Shortage of capital and lack of knowledge in new trends in trade were their problems. With active support of the Nationalised Banks, correct market study and joint operation and management, they are one of the flourishing and powerful groups of independent women workers in the country.

There is another case of a group of 100 women fish-vendors in a village in Kerala. They used to take loans of Rs. 30/- from to Rs. 40/- from private money-lenders each day giving a daily interest of Re. 1/- for every Rs. 10/-. They organised themselves into a Industrial Cooperative and with aid from the Banks at an interest rate of 4% per annum, they could make many times more money than they did. The number of women in this group is increasing.

New paths have already been cut open. Many young women entrepreneurs have come forward. Manufacture of electric fans, stainless steel vessels, cooking pans and pots, tin containers leather goods, garments, chemical products, fruit preservation, furniture, export promotion, are some of the new ventures successfully operated in a fairly large scale by women industrialists. One lady is engaged in a small mining operation. There is another in charge of a shipping line. These women come from the elite educated class. Handicrafts, bamboo work, fruit preservation, beedis, soap, dyeing and printing, handloom are some socio-economic schemes for women organised under the auspices of the Central Social Welfare Board. A women's wing of the National Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs has started attending to the difficulties and problem of women entrepreneurs and encouraging new ventures.

It is among the less-educated that the efforts have to be

concentrated. Attempts are made on an experimental scale to operate and tread into areas so far considered man's prerogative as in the case of a foundry and electroplating unit in Kerala. At first it was thought crazy and impossible. But the girls took up the training quickly and it has been a pleasant surprise to see them make the moulds and handle the molten metal with ease. To them 5 Kilograms of metal is as heavy or light as a 5 kilogram baby and the heat from the cupola is not more frightening than the heat in the kitchen. The idea is that in any community with increasing needs, both men and women can strike out new openings for jobs without depending only on traditional type of livelihoods.

Some ancillary units for women attached to the telephone, electronic and lamp industries, work well because they have no marketing difficulty. But such units are few and are only exceptions to the general rule. They also run into a number of difficulties common to all women's units. With some training, ancillary units can play a major role in women's industrialisation. At the Government level thought is being given to red-line ancillaries of public sector industries, which women could take up.

It is found that the projects for self-employment for women should work well if :

- (1) Every worker has an interest in the concern either by share or in any other capacity which will avoid exploitation ;
- (2) Project reports are drawn up with the assistance of competent and qualified authority till such time as they can manage to organise it on their own ;
- (3) Availability of raw materials is arranged ;
- (4) Bank finances are given at concessional rates of interest as to backward sections in the initial stages.
- (5) Sufficient management and technical training is given to women workers ;
- (6) Residential accommodation for women workers is arranged, if necessary ;

- (7) Creches are organised for the children of working mothers.
- (8) Technical and expert advice is made available when the units run into problems ;
- (9) 95% of these workers are women ;
- (10) A good sense of Trade Unionism and joint effort is inculcated so that they do not fall prey to fortune hunters of unions ;.
- (11) Women should be involved at decision-making levels ;
- (12) Special marketing facilities be planned.

While building up the infrastructure, strong national women's organisations have to encourage the movement. Women can be their own enemies. They are easy victims to those forces which have subjugated them for centuries and which can discourage them from taking up economically productive activity, which is still not accepted as women's vocation. They should also realise that good industrialists have to work hard and with dedication and determination. The role of the house-maker should not be an impediment to work. Again, women as employees, are generally acceptable ; but their efforts to be independent will have to bear down great resistance.

Being credulous and trained only to obey, trouble can be created among women themselves by interested parties who are sure to crop up as vested interests. These pitfalls have to be foreseen and early action taken. Participation in rural industries must be a properly studied and organised move. Very often there is likelihood of unremunerative units being palmed off to women. Even for rural industries, lack of training can be a serious problem.

There is a new trend regarding capital formation. In spite of legislation prohibiting it, the obnoxious dowry system persists and can only be removed if women are economically independent. So, to lighten the burden of dowry, parents are willing to invest small amounts for their daughters if it will give them employment. That is an important factor when capital for self-employment projects is organised.

The Sixth plan for development in India has some special programmes for women's industries. Utilising the blue-prints for these, a good start can be made in initiating women to industries on a large scale in the country, if the right infrastructure is built. — .

UNITED NATIONS

Several meetings of U. N. and specialised agencies have touched upon the subject of women's economic activities and some priority is already given to the subject. But the UN can play a more effective role in

- (1) conducting studies through appropriate agencies on various factors of industries like raw material, availability and technical cooperation ;
- (2) formulation of model projects so that they can illumine the dark path of experimentation ;
- (3) Assisting in training in skills and job orientation ;
- (4) planning a few projects for each developing nation to emphasise the participation of young women ;
- (5) having a committee connected with the national UN Commission in each country which will be the source of exchange of information ;
- (6) consider appropriate aid programmes in the initial experimental stage ;
- (7) monitor trends and policies so as to reach desired goals ; and
- (8) help in establishment of infrastructural services in rural areas.

After considering the programme of women's industrial development from various angles, the main refrain is, "women, awake."

## WOMEN AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

*Mary Boesveld*

Since the Second World War the world economy has experienced rapid growth and development, yet the benefits of this growth have accrued primarily to Western developed nations and to small elite groups in the developing countries. The disproportionate distribution of economic and political power is particularly reflected in the socio-economic disparities that exist between the ruling elites and the masses in developing countries. The growing differences in power and income among population groups are coupled with increasing inequality between the sexes.

The economic development strategies pursued by developing countries so far have not only been unable to reduce poverty, but have contributed to a general deterioration in living standards of a large proportion of the world's population.

The solution of development problems requires that economic growth takes place within the framework of a just and equitable distribution of economic rewards and social benefits among all segments of the population. This, in turn, requires equal access to income, knowledge and power for all groups, including women.

The Lima Declaration and Plan of Action gave special attention to women's participation in the industrial development

process, which was laid down in Resolution ID/B/RES. 44 (IX), as follows :

(a) The importance of securing for women, regardless of their marital status, the same opportunities as are available to men for gainful employment, and the importance of the economic independence derived from such employment for the promotion of the status of women in society ;

(b) Ensuring the fullest possible use of available human resources by incorporating women into training activities linked to industrial development at all levels and for all professional specializations from management to shop floor ;

(c) Equal remuneration with men and equality of treatment in respect of work of equal value, for women in industry ;

(d) The promotion in rural areas of the processing of agricultural products and manufacturing industries, particularly small scale industries, which will provide regular employment for women in such areas.

To translate these principles into practical measures it is necessary to examine the problems that women encounter as they try to participate in development processes. In this paper, first the situation of women in industry and in the modernization process in rural areas is described. Then attention is given to education as an important condition for the creation of better opportunities. Subsequently, are considered the particular impediments that women, in comparison to men, encounter in their participation in the development and industrialization processes and in education. Finally, a number of broad recommendations are made on ways in which the participation of women in the modernization and industrialization processes might be stimulated.

#### **WOMEN IN INDUSTRY**

The modern industrial sectors of almost all developing countries are able to utilize only a very small proportion of the

available labour force. The percentage of women in this proportion is minimal : of the world's employed industrial labour force only 15·3 per cent are women, which represents 18·7 per cent of all registered working women.

The distribution of women in industrial sectors is highly disproportionate. Irrespective of the stage of economic development or the pattern of industrialization of the country, most women industrial workers are employed in a narrow range of low-income, low-skilled and low-productivity jobs. They are found in particular in sectors that are labour-intensive, sensitive to market fluctuations, have a low level of technology, poor working conditions and safety measures, and little security of employment.

The place of women on the labour market is thus usually inferior to that of men. They have fewer opportunities of employment because fewer jobs are open to them; they usually occupy less-appreciated positions and receive lower wages than males. On a global basis, average wages for men and for women show a difference of 27 per cent ; in some countries and in certain branches of industry the difference is more than 50 per cent. Moreover, it is extremely rare to find a woman in a supervisory or managerial position.

Various justifications are attempted for employment discrimination on the basis of sex. One of the most common is the biological one that gives "natural" characteristics as the reason that one sex or the other is the more suited to a particular type of work. Even were this true, it has already been proven that it applies in only a very few cases, it does not explain why females should receive lower wages than males.

Protective legislation designed for the benefit of women workers (e.g. maternity leave, prohibition of nightwork etc.) is sometimes blamed for job segregation. Special rights and protection for women workers are said to make them too expensive for employment in certain jobs or industries. In practice, however, these regulations are frequently circumvented and even



quashed if sufficient demand arises for cheap labour. In Malaysia and Singapore, for example, the authorities have dispensed with the prohibition of nightwork in factories producing electronic equipment that employ young girls in three eight-hour shifts, seven days a week, with only a few days off in a year.

Another argument is that women do not usually need an income of their own because they are maintained by a male breadwinner. Women who work outside the home are said to do so for their own diversion, to earn pocket money. Moreover, it is argued, women are often only temporarily in the labour process, and have little hesitation in leaving their employment when they marry or become pregnant. In this way, not only is lower pay for women justified, but employment, wage and tax policies are based almost universally on the male breadwinner who has to support his wife.

Analyses of the situation in developing countries have mostly utilized the western model of the nuclear family with a male breadwinner and a "nonworking" housewife, totally ignoring the fact that large numbers of women are responsible for their own upkeep and for that of their children with little, if any, help from their husbands.

In some countries, notably in West Africa, it is the tradition that women should be responsible for a good part of the household expenses and for the education of the children irrespective of the husband's income. In other countries, too, women frequently provide the family income. On a global basis, the percentage of households with a female breadwinner is estimated at 38 per cent ; in some countries it is higher than 50 per cent, and there are signs that this percentage is increasing.

Most women in developing countries who work outside the home are compelled to do so by their poverty. Necessity causes many of them to work incredibly hard, under poor conditions, for a minimum wage.

If the number of skilled and educated women in a particular country increases compared to men, the result may be a shift

in the occupational structure. This is occurring in Africa, for example, where simple office jobs (typing etc.) were first held by men but are now more frequently held by women, for lower pay. The men then move up the occupational ladder to better-paid jobs with chances of advancement, such as assistant bookkeeper,

The spreading of education to larger population groups and educational reforms that open up more training courses to women create better employment opportunities but are not in themselves sufficient to improve the position of women on the job market so long as women are always placed in lower occupational categories than men with similar levels of education.

During the last few years, many countries of the third world have experienced a new development, namely, the arrival of large industries that employ predominantly, or even exclusively, women workers. Such industries are transferred to developing countries in the form of "run-away shops" or "offshore-sourcing projects". Both terms refer to American, European or Japanese multinational companies (MNCs) that transfer the labour-intensive parts of their production processes to developing countries where wages are very low. The majority produce consumer goods, import their own raw materials, and export the finished goods for sale abroad. They make toys, textiles, shoes and, increasingly, electronic equipment.

The magnitude of this development can be gauged from the fact that, at present, more than 90 per cent of the electronic equipment produced by North American industries is assembled by young women in third world countries. Runaway shops are found in South-east Asia, in particular, but also in the Caribbean, North Africa and South America. Dutch textile industries, which were transferred to Tunisia under the Government's restructuring plans, also have the characteristics of runaway shops.

Government of developing countries often offer important advantages to such industries: tax exemption from labour-

protecting regulations such as a fixed minimum wage, statutory holidays and the prohibition on nightwork for women. Trade union representation is vetoed or subjected to government control. The monies that the MNCs have to invest in their runaway shops are more than compensated by the low wages and other advantages. If industrial conditions deteriorate, or the host country passes through a period of recession, the MNC merely closes down its factory or moves it to a more favourable place.

The industries mostly employ young female workers who are given minimal if any, training, and are dismissed when they marry, usually after one or two years. Older women are sometimes dismissed en masse, to be replaced by younger girls at a lower, so-called apprentice wage.

A number of these industries in Malaysia and Singapore were studied with the intention of discovering why the majority of employees are women, even in Malaysia where many men are employed, and why preference is given to young girls.

The answers given by the works managers were summarized as follows: in comparison to men, female workers are more suitable for delicate work because they are more industrious, obedient, defter and patient, and have small fingers. They are less inclined to organize themselves in trade unions and are prepared to accept exceptionally low wages. Moreover, their recruitment is usually facilitated by the fact that other employment opportunities are almost non-existent. Young and unmarried women are the cheapest because they can be employed in shift work in factories that operate day and night.

These female characteristics are used even by governments in their efforts to attract foreign industry. An investment pamphlet produced by the Government of Singapore, for example, waxes lyrical on the devotion and diligence of the Eastern woman, and particularly on her quick and agile little fingers exceptionally suited for the assembling of small electronic

apparatus. At present, 50,000 women are employed by the electronics industry in Singapore.

Although such a development does have some favourable elements for women, such as a considerable increase in job opportunities and the temporary chance to earn money, it does not signify any effective improvement in their position. The work is extremely monotonous, there is little chance of learning a skill for later use, and there are no possibilities of advancement. Moreover, there is almost no security of employment since the factories are kept open only as long as they can make a considerable profit.

It seems feasible that, as in many other instances these women will lose their employment in the factories once capital-intensive methods of production replace labour-intensive methods, and that their place will then be taken by men.

Trade unions could play an important role in improving conditions for female workers and in achieving a position for women in industry equal to that of men. The literature on women's participation and struggle in the trade unions, however shows all too clearly that men in general and male workers in particular are more concerned that women should be allocated work that is of less value and for which lower wages are paid. Men prefer to retain for themselves the more attractive work with higher wages, and they do so by showing active resistance to women in the trade unions and other organizations. Industries in the developing countries that employ a large proportion of female labour are mostly non-unionized, with the result that women enjoy very little job security.

In times of economic crises, women are the first to be thrown out of the labour market. All over the world, not only in the developing countries where there is a high rate of unemployment, women workers constitute an industrial "labour reservoir", i. e. they are taken on in periods of economic growth, only to be cast off when the economy goes through a period of recession.

A comparison of the situation of male and female workers shows that women are generally on the lower rungs of the occupational ladder and are paid the lowest wage. In addition, they are the last to benefit from industrialization and modernization.

#### WOMEN AND MODERNIZATION IN RURAL AREAS

In the rural areas of developing countries, development and modernization have long been directed primarily towards large-scale cash-crop farming. Far less attention has been given to subsistence farming and to the production of local food crops. The important role played by women in many countries as farmers and food producers, without the benefit of modern technology, knowhow and skills, has been largely neglected.

Agricultural training programmes, cash-crop cultivation schemes and agricultural industries are usually designed and implemented by men and geared to men's requirements. In some countries, this neglect of rural women and of their task as food producers has had disastrous consequences. Poverty and starvation have been caused by the lack of land and labour for food production as a result of modern developments.

In parts of Africa, for example, a large part of the rural male population is employed by large foreign enterprises. The migration of males to the cities has considerably increased the workload of the women who stay behind in the villages to produce food by means of subsistence agriculture.

Male workers in rural areas are usually concerned with the production of cash crops and have the use of the most fertile land. The result has been a decline in food production and consequent food shortages leading to malnutrition and the poor health among large sections of the population. In many Latin American countries, cash-crop farming is organized by large-scale enterprises that own most of the best agricultural land.

Poor peasant families are employed as seasonal workers at ridiculously low wages, and are often expected to work and to live under appalling conditions.

Subsistence farming does not provide an adequate living for such families who are able only to squeeze a meagre harvest from their tiny plots of marginal land. As a result, they are almost forced to contract debts that they then have to repay out of their earning from seasonal labour.

Women are particularly affected by these wretched economic conditions. They are frequently subjected to strong pressure to accept wages and working conditions that are even worse than those of men because they have their children to feed and care for—a task for which little help is forthcoming from men. There is ample evidence that men do not always devote their wages or money received from the sale of cash crops to the needs of their families but prefer to spend it on items that give them prestige and personal gratification such as radios, wrist-watches, liquor etc.

In the majority of countries rural women have traditionally played a very important part in the preparation of food products, such as cheese and butter, and of consumer goods such as earthenware and textiles. The introduction of new advanced techniques was disadvantageous for them as compared to men, depriving them of the chance to earn an income with the aid of minor handicrafts and cottage industry. In general women are far less able than men to obtain capital and have less access to credit with which to buy better and more efficient machinery. Training courses in the new techniques are rarely open to women with the result that men gain an increasing share in small manufacturing businesses and exercise increasing control over production and marketing.

This is the case in the rural areas of Guatemala, for example, where the traditional method of weaving with a backstrap loom has been replaced by the large Spanish footloom that is generally operated by men. The women have been forced to take

up the less-valued jobs such as carding and winding that need less skill and less investment in equipment. Because they no longer do the weaving, they no longer have any share in the sales of the end product. They earn far less, have lost their prestige as important artisans, and have become dependent on the earnings of the male members of the family.

In many developing countries, women are responsible for a very large share of cottage industry. In those countries where their freedom of movement is severely restricted, cottage industries provide the majority of women with their only means of earning a living. In doing so, however, they are often exploited by men and compelled to work for extremely low wages because men act as middlemen for the raw materials and for the finished products.

Even when cottage industries are organized into co-operatives, ostensibly to help their participating members, women are rarely allowed to join the board of the co-operatives and are consequently excluded from the decision-making process.

The introduction of large-scale manufacturing enterprises with their mass production of consumer goods threatens the existence of cottage industries and of the small artisans. As a result, many women will eventually no longer be able to earn a living. Men will also lose some of their traditional ways of earning, but they have more chance than women of being taken into the modern industrial sector.

The poor conditions that prevail in the agricultural sector and the declining opportunities of earning in the rural areas often force women to migrate to the towns (e.g. in Latin America). When they reach the urban areas, however, they have little chance of joining the modern industrial labour force and, as a result, fall back to the lowest rungs of the occupational ladder in the informal sector where they work as domestic servants, prostitutes, marketeers, street vendors etc. As the modern sector expands, however, they are likely to be deprived even of this sort of work (market women, for example, cannot

compete with a supermarket).

Official labour and production statistics make no mention of the work done by women as food producers, in cottage industries and in the informal sector. Such work thus remains invisible, and development and modernization plans make no allowance for the fact that large groups of women increasingly lose control over their traditional sources of income without having any alternative means of earning a reasonable standard of living for themselves and their children.

#### WOMEN AND EDUCATION

Women in the majority of developing countries, and also in the Western world, lag far behind men as regards education, a fact that is often considered to be one of the most important reasons for their inferior position on the labour market.

Their educational handicap is clearly shown by statistics : on a global basis, more than 50 per cent of women are illiterate, against 28 per cent of men. In the majority of developing countries, there are three boys to two girls at the primary level, two boys to one girl at the secondary level, and more than four boys to one girl at the post-secondary level.

These figures are average for all developing countries ; in some regions the situation is far more unfavourable for girls.

There is an inverse correlation between the segregation of the sexes on the one hand, and the educational levels achieved by women on the other. In Islamic countries, for example, where women often experience sex segregation, the proportion of the female population that participates in the educational process is smaller than in other countries. Nevertheless, a relatively high proportion of women belonging to the Islamic elite are able to enjoy a university education.

The availability and nature of educational facilities is a frequent hindrance to participation. In rural areas, schools are few and far between and students have to travel long distances.



This is a hindrance for both sexes, but it seems to weigh more heavily on girls since the percentage of girls who attend school in rural areas is almost everywhere lower than in the towns.

In addition, the educational system is rarely co-ordinated with agrarian working conditions. Primary and secondary education is usually quite formal, both in rural and urban areas; pupils are educated for white-collar jobs. Such jobs are in demand because they represent intellectual rather than manual work and are accorded greater prestige. Competition, for these positions is considerable and the developing countries are typified by a surplus of educated people who are unable to find employment because of the lack of suitable jobs. Openings for women are even more restricted than those for men because other factors impede their entry into the labour market.

The shortage of work opportunities for women is aggravated by the fact that training courses for technical professions and industrial on-the-job training programmes are rarely accessible to them. Education that is linked to technical assistance and agricultural development is also, in the majority of cases, male oriented.

Access to education is also largely determined by socio-economic status. Daughters in poor families frequently have to do the domestic chores while their mothers work, and are thus prevented from attending school. Moreover, it is a common belief that education reduces a girl's marriage prospects since the husband's authority could be threatened by a wife who knew more and could earn more. Among the better classes, on the other hand, girls are encouraged to undergo further education as a means of finding a suitable partner. The men in such circles apparently have so many advantages that they do not feel threatened by a well-educated woman.

In the majority of countries it is very difficult even for well-educated women to achieve top positions; in industry, in particular, women are rarely found at the top levels. In general, however, well-educated women have less trouble in finding employment.

Many women do not properly utilize their education. They usually end up in typical "women's jobs" and, in comparison to men, do work that is below their educational level, even in the developing countries where there is a shortage of well-educated people. Attention ought to be given to this wastage of knowledge and skills.

Education is an important factor in improving the possibilities for people to take part in modern developments : the setting-up of good professional training courses, increasing informal education adapted to people's living conditions, opening-up all kinds of education to both sexes, encouraging girls to participate in educational programmes, particularly technical training courses—these are just a few of the conditions that could create better chances for everybody and for women in particular.

Such measures are not sufficient in themselves, however, because women's disadvantageous position compared to that of men, which is partly expressed in the educational facilities that are open to them, has deeply rooted origins.

#### THE VULNERABILITY OF WOMEN

The inequality between the sexes is global. In the developing countries the majority of people are poverty stricken. Women and men share the problems of under-development that originate in the unequal division of economic and political power in the world.

On the national and local levels many problems result from the great differences in power and income between the elite and the majority of the population, both men and women.

In addition to this, women are in an especially disadvantaged position as compared to men, disadvantages that find expression particularly in the process of modernization and industrialization.

This inequality is based on the division of labour in the family, whereby women are responsible for the welfare and well-being of all family members, especially the children. This has

been referred to the "breeder-feeder" role:

From the earliest and simplest hunting and gathering folk to the most industrialized society of the twentieth century, the breeding of babies and the feeding of humans of all ages is almost exclusively the work of women, above and beyond other productive processes in which she is engaged.

The significant element here is women's responsibility for feeding the family. Women all over the world prepare the meals for their families, but in addition many women, especially in developing countries, produce these meals as subsistence farmers or have to find the means with which to pay for food and for their children's upbringing. This makes them far more vulnerable than men, who are able to back out of this responsibility when it gets too much for them, and frequently show no hesitation in doing so.

Women who have to earn a living in addition to doing household chores and looking after children thus have a double task, and as a result are doubly vulnerable.

This unequal division of work between man and woman is supported by cultural concepts that prevail all over the world; concepts that confine women's activities to "home and hearth" while those of the men are associated with the community as a whole, the "public sphere".

Another very important factor is that this contraposition is linked to a difference in appreciation: work in the public sphere, i. e. in general, masculine activities, is more highly valued in the form of prestige or economic advantages. The lower values given to the activities of women (in some cases no value at all) confirm and perpetuate the unequal distribution of power between men and women. In this way, women are trebly vulnerable.

The inequality of power between male and female has everywhere the same basis. The degree to which women are vulnerable, however, and the manner in which that vulnerability is expressed, can show strong regional and class differences.

These differences appear particularly in the measure in which women have the opportunity to earn their own income or the measure in which the community recognizes women's unpaid labour as a contribution to the family income. Another important factor is the extent to which the discrimination between the men's and women's worlds is carried through. Examples of regional differences include, on the one hand, the women farmers and market women of West Africa who enjoy a high degree of economic self-sufficiency and who play a role in public life through their own clubs and organizations. (Even in West Africa, women take little part in the official processes of political decision-making; very few women occupy top positions in government or industry.) On the other hand, the majority of those in the Islamic regions, live in a women's world of household and family. They are often entirely isolated from the men's world, and are not considered to make a contribution to the family income.

In Western countries the division into a feminine, homely sphere and a masculine public sphere is strongly emphasized and has even further stressed in the modernization process, which creates a sharp distinction between residential and work spheres and encourages the isolation of nuclear families. In the ideal image of the bourgeois Western family, the men are the breadwinners and work away from home while the women "don't work" but nevertheless are responsible for the well-being of the members of the family. This concept has now lost some of its validity but is by no means obsolete, for example, it still helps to determine the position of women in the labour market in the Netherlands.

The ideal image of the Western family was first introduced into many developing countries by the missionaries and colonial governments, to be frequently adopted by the national elites. Even today, such concepts lie at the root of many government policies and of proposals made by development experts and entrepreneurs who, in determining investment, employment,

wages, and education policies, give their main attention to the male population towards whom they are biased.

These relationships in inequality in the family and on the labour market are self-reinforcing : because women are vulnerable, their position on the labour market is unfavourable. If their wage is low and their work insecure, they are not able to care properly for themselves and for their children. Their dependency on men increases, and with it their vulnerability.

The improvement and expansion of educational facilities for women is not sufficient to break this circle: women's participation in education is also strongly determined by the division of work in the family and cultural concepts to which that is linked. Women's backwardness in education signifies a further impairment of their position.

In the modernization process women's vulnerability increases because, it is mostly the men who obtain employment in the public, modern sector, while women are left behind in subsistence and marginal sectors of the economy.

Women are not only deprived of access to their traditional ways of earning a living, they have less disposal than the men over new knowledge, skills and capital, and have less access to modern means of support.

#### **COCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS**

An understanding of the role of women in the modernization and industrialization processes, and attempts to improve their situation can only be achieved in the context of the power relations that exist in the international economy, at the national level between elite groups and the masses, and between the sexes.

A more equitable distribution of income, knowledge and power at all levels calls for fundamental changes in the economic structures of developed as well as developing countries.

A development strategy cannot function properly without the direct involvement of women in the fight against hunger and

poverty, giving them an equal share in prosperity and well being. By implication, therefore, any planning of policy and action must take into account the particularly vulnerable position of women and special attention should be given to the unequal division of work in the family and to the cultural concepts by which this inequality is endorsed and continued.

The participation of women in those sectors of society that are traditionally male-dominated should be encouraged and it is equally necessary that the importance of women's work and life be acknowledged. Men should be encouraged to participate in sectors of society that are traditional to women, as equal partners with women.

With regard to the participation of women in the industrialization process, the following recommendations are made :

1. Policies relating to areas of expanded employment for women should focus on :

(a) The development of agro-businesses and food-processing industries, giving full attention to the role of women in food production and preparation ;

(b) The promotion of small-scale industries in rural areas, giving priority to applied technology for household and agricultural use ;

(c) Equal availability to men and women of employment in such industries ;

(d) The creation and expansion of opportunities for the self-employment of women by the increased availability of credit, dissemination of relevant information etc. ;

(e) The creation of alternative opportunities to earn an income when existing jobs are eliminated by the modernization process.

2. In the areas of industrial policy and legislation, special attention should be given to :

(a) The development of legal measures by which to

reduce discrimination in employment due to sex or marital status on the basis of standards established by the United Nations and the International Labour Organisation ;

(b) The development of legislative principles and guidelines for the implementation of social and economic policies intended to reduce the inequality between the sexes ;

(c) The development of protective legislation relating to working conditions for both men and women.

3. To reduce or eliminate the sex-labelling of jobs and the unequal work distribution among men and women, it is necessary to :

(a) Provide access to all forms and levels of education and training for both boys and girls ;

(b) Encourage girls and women to participate in technical training courses and industrial training programmes that were formerly reserved for men ;

(c) Encourage boys and men to participate in programmes and courses that were formerly designed for women.

4. In decision-making functions, women should be :

(a) Involved at the national, regional and local levels, particularly when issues arise that are related to any aspects of the mechanization of traditional tasks or to the conversion of production to factory-based manufacturing processes ;

(b) Involved in the development of measures with which to alleviate the double workload of job and family, and to provide opportunities for both men and women.

5. Trade union policies should include :

(a) Increased roles and participation for women at all levels of trade union work ;

(b) Equal treatment of men and women at all levels, from factory floor to management ;

(c) Co-operation and exchange of information and ideas between unions in developed and developing countries.

## **THE STATUS OF WOMEN, FERTILITY PATTERNS AND INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYMENT IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

*Indira A. Subramaniam*

The subject of the integration of women from developing countries into the industrialization process is vast and complicated by differences between the cultural systems and traditions, religions, historical experiences, alien influences (affecting their legal and social systems), geography and economic infrastructure of these countries. Therefore, certain common characteristics need to be identified in order to form a basis for evolving solutions and making recommendations aimed at benefiting all developing countries.

The developing countries are not repeating the patterns of industrialization of developed countries ; as a result, solutions to problems effective in industrialized countries are not necessarily applicable in developing countries and the experience of the former cannot be effectively utilized to direct the progress of the latter. The technology of developed countries often absorbs too many resources and provides too few jobs. It tends to increase income inequalities, already marked in developing countries. The small elite groups in developing countries tend to use imported products, which prevents the development of the mass market for more labour-intensive simple commodities



hampering the incorporation of women into the labour force.

In experiencing a relatively long transition from an agrarian economy to industrialization, production in the Western developed countries moved from home to factory and concurrently some social adjustment was made as evidenced in the gradual development of rights and privileges accorded to women and a general improvement in their educational levels. Yet even this adjustment remains inadequate in terms of the total utilization of women in the labour force of developed nations.

In developing countries, on the other hand, the agrarian economy is often juxtaposed with high technology. There has been little or no gradual transition but superimposition of Western technology and its values upon society. The economics of under-development are linked to under-utilization of available human resources resulting from over-population and overly rapid urbanization on the one hand and the cultural and socio-economic imbalance on the other.

#### WOMEN IN THE INDUSTRIALIZATION PROCESS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Two of the significant factors affecting the entry of women into the industrial labour force in developing countries are (a) cultural traditions affecting the status of women ; and (b) the economic consequences of high fertility.

*Cultural traditions affecting the status of women :* Cultural traditions, including religious and institutionalized social mores, have always been primary determinants of female status and roles. This manifests itself in the sexual division of labour, differential decision-making and authority patterns of men and women, and in the attitudes of women reflected in the presence or absence of organized women's groups to protect women's rights and the level of sophistication of social legislation affecting the status of women.

A definition of the status of women must include the econo-

mic element. Women are tied to families and families are, in turn, tied to manpower and industrial production. The industrialization process is therefore a highly significant means of effecting progressive changes by redefining the roles and status of women in society. Women, are, therefore a crucial element in the overall process of economic development.

Industrialization affects life styles, consumption patterns, and above all, creates occupational alternatives and opportunity structures for women that can lead to economic independence, power and prestige in society on a new basis. Yet, the industrialization process has thus far not accomplished these goals and, in fact, has brought to the surface negative constraints that prevent women from participating effectively in economic development.

A major factor affecting women entering the labour force is the sex-typing of occupations, which is universal and inhibits the redefinition of the roles of women in industrialization. It limits employment opportunities open to women and serves to perpetuate inequalities between the sexes.

The process of industrialization is capable of restructuring societal values, and revamping the economic infrastructure to enable a reduction in the sex-typing of occupations. Sex-typing of occupations has been known to disappear temporarily when imbalances in sex-ratios caused by war economic necessity require women to undertake jobs usually performed by men. This occurred in many countries during and after the Second World War when numerous jobs became available for women because of a shortage of males in the labour force. In times of great social upheaval (wars or revolutions) social structures and traditions are often disrupted and the chains of cultural tradition temporarily broken. Sex-typing has also disappeared when there has been considerable rural-urban migration, primarily of adult males, which has resulted in the women being left behind as heads of household to take on tasks usually undertaken by men.

Even in highly developed countries the integration of women

into predominantly male preserves such as management, organization, decision and policy-making roles etc., has not occurred to any significant extent. (In the United States of America, some progress has been made in terms of the Equal Rights Amendment in which women are guaranteed equality of opportunity and access to all positions in society. Yet, this proposed Amendment has not yet been ratified.)

Another factor affecting the participation of women in the industrial labour force is male chauvinism and institutionalized inequality of the sexes. The tradition of 'machismo' is by no means relegated to Latin-America ; it is universal. A majority of men in most societies have been programmed by tradition to perceive women as being useful solely in domestic and familial roles, and it is extremely difficult to effect long-lasting changes in such attitudes. The concept of women as wage-earning, economically independent, goal-oriented individuals who can interact with men as equals is alien and radical to the cultural traditions of most developing countries. The inferior position of women starts in the cradle ; it is perpetuated by ignorance and lack of education and exacerbated by the traditions, religious orthodoxy and economics of family structures and systems.

Strong pressure is also exerted on women to stay within the familial realm by the practice of sex-segregation as dictated by religion and tradition. This is more apparent among less educated women who face strong cultural pressures and even social stigma if they venture to work outside the home. In the Middle East generally, women are discouraged or prohibited from taking up employment outside the home, even as domestic servants.

It is obvious that the level of economic and industrial development of a country determines the prevalent family structure in a society. This, combined with poverty, affects sex-role definitions of women and their status. For example, the predominance of extended family systems usually common to agrarian societies, affects the attitudes towards work outside the

familial sphere. The nuclear family normally improves both male and female attitudes towards non-domestic remunerative employment as familial, traditional pressures exerted by elders, peers and the community are considerably weaker.

In many parts of the world only the poorest women work and the ability to avoid the necessity of manual labour or work has been an important distinguishing sign of socio-economic status. However, only a very small proportion of upper-class, urban women utilize education and economic independence as status symbols. Caste, or the position of an individual in a tribe, clan or community, more often determines whether women work or not. Generally, the higher the social position in an agrarian society, the less the propensity to take up paid employment. The attitudes of women and their degree of participation in the industrial labour force also depend upon their ability to adjust to traditional norms by seeking ways and means to bypass them. Whenever traditional group norms, dominated by conforming males and familial and community pressures, remain in effect, the inequality of women is perpetuated, inhibiting their active and effective participation in the industrial development, process. When individual or personal achievement-orientations of advancement, social mobility, improved health and so on become equally important to both men and women, will women be sufficiently encouraged, motivated and capable of being involved in the industrial occupational structure.

#### ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF HIGH FERTILITY

The economic impact of fertility on the role of women in the industrialization process should be viewed from two levels : macro-economic and micro-economic.

*Macro-economic level*—At the macro-economic level high fertility and consequent over-population have a negative impact on society as a whole, as they increase unemployment and cause under-employment. While the number of employed persons

has increased in developing countries, the number of unemployed has increased progressively as well. Over-population provides a rationale for the continued male dominance in the urban industrial labour force at all levels ; and implies that as long as there are unemployed males in a society, the position of women will remain subservient and relegated to domesticity or subsistence agricultural pursuits.

The problems that affect women's participation in industrial development are : (a) that economic growth causes capital-intensive and industrial labour-saving devices to be used thereby reducing the supply of jobs ; (b) high population growth rates simultaneously increase the number of people of working age and the number of dependents and thus raise the demand for already scare jobs ; (c) in urban areas unplanned, large-scale, rural-urban migration compounds the imbalance between jobs and people and results in poverty. Thus, a fundamental conflict occurs between economic production output and employment objectives that arises from a shortage of capital and an abundance of labour. Urban areas need to increase their employment generating capacity for both men and women, and rural-urban migration needs to be slowed down or discouraged by the economic development of rural areas to provide jobs for rural populations.

Rapid population growth is one the most effective inhibitors to women entering the industrial labour force, the solution to which is more jobs rather than sheer growth in overall economic terms. Jobs provide a re-distribution of income as they reduce inequalities of income and wealth, provide wages and the eventual development of social security systems, health benefits, pension systems etc. that have been non-existent and are still unknown for the masses in most developing countries. Jobs also create a sense of self-worth, they provide a shift in values and goals of individuals ; the fatalism of the poor in developing countries is transformed into positive aspirations.

One of the universal consequences of a labour surplus

economy is the exploitation of women entering the labour force. The development of protective groups, such as unions and other social or governmental groups, and appropriate legislation catering to the needs of women seem premature and irrelevant to policy makers in the face of large-scale economic problems afflicting a society. This situation could be changed by deliberate, rational, far-sighted policies and attendant legislation to support the necessary implementation. Women, as under-utilized human resources, should be looked upon as assets, not liabilities; their employment should be seen as contributing to economic growth, not stifling it. And if, in the short term, the creation of jobs and the utilization of women retards growth, the loss is negligible in comparison to long-term, permanent, economic, social and demographic benefits.

*Micro-economic*—At the micro-economic level, high fertility rates deter women from entering the industrial labour force because of child bearing and child rearing activities. Severe pressures stem from the family and community requiring women to play the roles of wife and mother. Religion, tradition and superstition have an important impact on the lives of illiterate or semi-illiterate women and men and the attitudes of women towards entry into the industrial labour force must be considered. Women in many countries are viewed as an economic burden, which places them at an economic, social and psychological disadvantage. The only way a woman can achieve some measure of status and influence in certain types of society is to bear sons. Women are often married young in some societies and reproduction commences early. They are therefore disadvantaged in terms of acquiring adequate skills, knowledge or education for purposes of industrial involvement. It is difficult for them to assert themselves and think independently as long as such social practices continue.

Many people see children as sources of old-age security, especially developing countries where old-age benefit systems are virtually non-existent for the majority. The cost of bearing

and caring for children is dispersed among extended family members rather than being the sole responsibility of the parents, which in turn gives rise to the characteristically high dependency ratios prevalent in many developing countries. Where the group and tradition exert pressure on the individual to bear children, and not to work, and where status adheres to reproduction, then work is not considered a viable alternative. If reasons such as social mobility, health, new goals, personality development, economic betterment etc. motivate individuals to become involved in the non-domestic occupational sphere, then status would adhere to economic production rather than reproduction. The rewards must be perceived by women themselves and should directly accrue to them, and not to their husbands, fathers or the community, as a prerequisite to women being motivated to work on a continuing, career-oriented basis.

#### WOMEN IN THE LABOUR FORCE

Few women in developed or developing countries pursue satisfying careers as sufficient opportunities are not available. Most women enter and remain in low-status, mechanical, repetitive, routine occupations in the urban areas, or increasingly unrewarding agricultural work in the rural areas. There is no incentive for them to work except sheer economic necessity. Few work for purposes of career development, self-development or satisfaction.

Declining populations in developed countries and zero population growth have led increasing numbers of women to work. Some women work because they have small families or none ; some work because they need money ; some want to work. In many developed countries, women in the labour force have increased because there are higher proportions of single women who have to support themselves : a higher number of divorcees (an increasingly significant group) are single parents and have to support themselves and their children ; and widows,

though their percentage is declining. While all of these factors together are not always relevant in the developing countries, the reason why women work remains much the same for the vast majority, namely, economic necessity.

Many women in developing countries are able and willing to work, but socio-economic supply and demand considerations determine their incorporation into the industrial labour force. The availability of women to enter the labour force is contingent upon their levels of education, acquired capabilities and skills, decision-making power and independence of action, together with the characteristics of the female population itself including the attitudes of women to working outside the home.

The demand for women in the labour force depends upon the level of economic development on the one hand and the organization of the economic infrastructure on the other. However, in itself the level of economic development does not explain the extent to which women participate in non-agricultural work. By the same token, education, for example, in itself does not lead to greater propensities for employment. Employability increases with education, but social factors and availability of opportunities often determine whether a woman can actively participate in the industrialization process or not.

It is increasingly apparent that given continued progress along current lines, more women will be entering the labour force due to :

- (a) Longer life expectancy ;
- (b) Increasing educational attainment of the female segment of the population as new methods and policies reach even the remotest villages ;
- (c) Later ages at marriage as educational levels rise and more women seek-work ;
- (d) Declining fertility, freeing more women for non-reproductive roles and non-familial activities.

Contrary to expectations, economic development programmes have not substantially increased female employment



rates in many developing countries. In fact, one consequence of economic development has been rural-urban migration which has caused an over-abundance of males competing for scarce jobs in urban areas causing women to drop out of the labour force altogether. Unemployed husbands or the absence of male providers, due to death or divorce etc., force women to seek work in order to obtain the basic necessities of life for themselves and their families, but work is not readily available. When economic conditions improve, many of these women, if not supported by other incentives and a change in attitudes, drop out of the labour force. Compelled work therefore has little influence on traditional attitudes ; the ideal is to create a continuous, permanent female labour force that can provide an effective long-term contribution to the process of industrialization

Thus far in most countries, women have been utilized in exploitive, menial, manual, labour-intensive types of work. For example, they have been utilized in agriculture for planting and harvesting ; in industry for spinning, weaving and hand-pounding ; in construction as human conveyor belts for masonry and earth ; and in services as domestic servants, which is often a form of exploitive indentured labour with no rights, privileges or benefits. There seems to be minimal utilization of women in the transportation industry, while female involvement in the manufacturing sector depends on the traditional sexual division of labour. In distribution and sales, women are generally grossly under-represented. Although street vendors and sidewalk hawkers are often women in many developing countries, and some serve in family-owned stores, these can hardly be defined as intergral parts of an inustrial labour force.

Women are relatively few in white collar jobs, but it is one important area where they are increasingly involved. In developed countries, this area has provided the greatest opportunity for women. In the developing countries, the upwardly mobile new lower-middle classes constitute an expanding sector of population, and the growth of education and

higher levels of literacy and training have begun to influence women making them important sources of labour at this level. Even so it would seem that in countries where segregation of the sexes is still practised, major obstacles prevail.

The privilege of elitist groups is reflected in the opportunities for educated women to enter professional employment in many developing countries. Yet, too few women avail themselves of these advantages. No traditional patterns have been established to limit women's participation in the upper echelons of the industrial labour force. Thus, power and privilege of elitist backgrounds and the lack of precedence could enable women to enter these areas relatively easily. Specifically, women have exhibited extremely low participation levels in those areas of industry concerned with distribution, management, administration and organization. It is here, if at all that a breakthrough is necessary permitting women entry at the policy-and decision-making levels in order that they may work towards achieving increased participation of women at the lower echelons as all.

The true relevance of any study of the occupational patterns and preferences of women lies in defining prospects for educating and training them to achieve a degree of equitable participation in industrial jobs at all levels.

The lack of education and training among women has been a major disadvantage for them. Education and training are important for the acquisition of skills and knowledge crucial for effective participation in an industrial labour force. Women should not only be educated reappraise their own personal worth, identify personal objectives and goals, improve family conditions and perceive alternative rewards for themselves but also be taught modern frames of reference for work habits e. g. continuity in the labour force, regularity of attendance, commitment to work, assertiveness, awareness of rights and privileges, and concern with benefits, career planning and development.

Vocational training (either pre-job or on-the-job) provides much needed technical and manual skills for women and vastly

improves their capability for increased earning capacity. A purely functional orientation would have a serious drawback in that it could perpetuate the traditional exploitation of women if not properly controlled. When effectively implemented, it can be used to incorporate women into the labour force in a beneficial and positive manner.

Social change cannot be effected quickly or easily, particularly in those areas of change that involve reassessment of power, authority, ideology and personal independence which are important for all individuals. Personal and societal values are subjective and difficult to modify or change and yet they are particularly significant because they exert substantial pressure upon the functioning of society. It is inevitable that the law is more objective, pragmatic, and effective in bringing about desired change in the thinking of its citizens.

Women have been socially and economically disadvantaged almost everywhere in the world. They are often rated as second-class citizens and continue to remain so. In attempting to change the attitudes of men towards women, and in order for women to change their own attitudes developed due to years of biased socialization, progressive legislation could be utilized as a first step.

Legislation infiltrates all areas of existence and can provide effective support for progressive social policies. In attempting to remove the barriers inhibiting the integration of women into the industrialization process, direct and indirect incentives and encouragement can be provided to both men and women, and to families, tribes clans and communities.

Initial legislation would be unpopular in many instances, but it is the only means available, and it could be enforced. It is probable that out of total hostility, a certain amount of social tolerance would emerge and in time the tolerance would evolve into commitment and support for this ideal.

*The impact of multinationals*—The 1970's were characterized by the intensive search by large manufacturing companies from

developed countries for inexpensive labour to be used in labour-intensive areas of manufacturing. Wages and other costs of production have increased substantially due to strong competition, unionization and supportive legislation resulting in the erosion of large profit margins in developed countries. Many companies from the developed countries are turning to the developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America as a means of combating competitive pressures in the economic market-place. The impact of these multinationals on the economies of developing countries is controversial even though generally perceived in negative terms, they are capable of engendering economic trends beneficial not only to themselves but also to the host developing countries.

Generally, the type of industrial production introduced by these companies is female-labour-intensive. While it is acknowledged that employment opportunities are being opened up for women, they are primarily in subordinate, unskilled, or semi-skilled jobs where conditions of work are poor, opportunities for advancement non-existent and job insecurity prevalent. Women, more so than men, are often paid subsistence wages and hours of work are not specified. In addition, the skills used or learned by women are limited and non-transferable a form of "trained incapacity" (A term by Robert Merton, sociologist, United States of America.) or they perform repetitive tasks requiring no skills and of no long term economic value. In some cases the industries are transient and marginal "fad" industries such as those manufacturing plastic flowers, wigs, toys etc. that depended upon Western demand for their survival. When the market fails local investors go bankrupt, workers are laid-off and join the ranks of the unemployed and the multinational corporation merely moves away. In many instances, these women workers are not unionized and are often discouraged from joining unions by their own governments as this may discourage foreign investment in the country. Inflation political instability and a host of other factors make this type of

employment undesirable for women as they cannot be integrated into the industrial labour force on a continuing long-term basis.

Multinationals do not fully utilize or develop manpower resources within the developing economy even though they are a part of the local economy. Their policies of employment are inadequate and their goals are usually short-term. Where long-term economic development is concerned they have no policy at all and do not necessarily concern themselves with it. In addition, the multinationals act as agents that transfer or introduce new technology in a package form that is neither adapted to local needs nor oriented towards national goals. This results in emphasis on large scale industrial production that may generate growth but does not generate employment, and at the same time displaces small-and medium scale enterprises that are significant sources of employment for women. Their presence also leads to the neglect of the rural infrastructure. Finally, they encourage rural-urban migration by attracting people to the cities thereby exacerbating urban employment problems. All this perpetuates the dependency of the developing country on the multinationals, which is unhealthy for long-term economic growth.

When developed countries provide economic aid, the type of industrial technology does not always assist the overall long-range plans of economic development of the developing country. Most industrial projects involving transfer of know-how and technology from developed to developing countries consider the problem of economic aid from the standpoint of experience in the donor country, therefore, many of the stereotyped notions that inhibit the participation of women in industry in developed countries are transferred by ignorance or design to the developing countries. When agreements and contracts for aid are signed between developing country Governments and developed country organizations, companies, or international agencies, there are usually no stipulations governing the use of the labour force etc. that could refer to the utilization of females

along with attendant training facilities. If developed countries are attempting to assist developing countries, it is ironic that a significant part of the potential labour force is ignored.

Thus, new strategies must be planned to bring about changes not only in the planners, peoples and politicians of the developing countries, but also in those of developed countries that must redefine their scientific and technological policies, trade policies, roles as donors of aid and roles as foreign investors.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. In depth research should be undertaken to assess the attitudes of women and the impact of familial and community pressures on them within specific cultural, national, regional, and sub-regional contexts.

2. Dissemination of information on the benefits of womens participation in the labour force within each cultural framework should be increased at all levels of society, particularly among decision makers and planners of industrial development and those who influence women's decisions to work. For example, the following types of benefits could be included :

- a. Improvement in the standards of living and increased income ;
- b. Improvement in the educational attainment of the entire population ;
- c. Improvement in the utilization of human resources for the benefit of the region and nation or even the tribal or ethnic group ;
- d. Improvement in the quality of life and achievement of personal goals for individuals, families and the future generation ;
- e. Generation of economic multiplier effects at all levels of the economy to benefit individuals and communities.

3. Women must be provided with the basic skills and incentives to enter the labour force and the opportunity to enter traditionally non-female fields of work. In developing countries especially women need to be provided with motivation and scope to be removed from subsistence cultivation or other forms of unrewarding agrarian activity. Education and training facilities need to be increased and expanded at both formal and informal levels and should include girls and women at all stages. Thus, training involving the acquisition of usable skills should focus on : (a) the traditional female occupations that have been expanded and developed in scope, which should be organized and integrated into the industrial development process ; and (b) the non-traditional occupations that have been part of the male domains of activity or are new occupations emerging from industrialization. In addition a fundamental re-education is required for those definers of tradition, that is males and older persons who wield social authority, who strongly affect the choices of women. Re-education is also required of union personnel, particularly the leaders, who must develop empathy and sensitivity and commitment to the needs and requirements of women workers in transition. Agricultural extension courses should be made available to rural women in order to familiarize them with cocepts of basic health and home economics, elementary marketing and craft skill improvement. Use can be made of multi-disciplinary teams to work in villages to make women aware of opportunities and to improve their literacy. This could very well generate further productive investment.

4. Human resource policies need to be developed as they are fundamental ingredients of the industrialization process and are linked to the incorporation of women into the industrial labour force. Four areas of policy and resultant legislation need to be focused upon with particular stress on the issue of structural unemployment as it relates to women :

Social policy, which includes all those areas relevant to the

welfare, security and progress of a nation's citizens. This includes the introduction, development or modification of taxation systems, insurance, pension schemes or old age security systems ; laws on unemployment ; monetary incentives for dual income families and for small families ; reassessment of the monetary value of housework (as working women usually continue to perform at two levels) etc.

Family policy, which includes areas of daily life that affect the decision and opportunity for women to take up work in the industrial labour force. For example, incentives should be provided in the form of child allowances, child care provisions, maternity leave benefits, child support, assistance for divorced or widowed women, inheritance laws, assistance with migration, provision of housing for families with working wives and mothers, health benefits ; protection should be provided against polygamy, minimal age at marriage, forced marriage etc.

Educational policy, which includes making existing and planned education and training opportunities available to men and women, taking into consideration the hitherto neglected needs of women. This includes both formal classroom and informal types of education and training, changes in examination systems to permit women entrants to participate, flexible class times to suit the needs of working or married women, subsidized training etc. Included in this area would also be changes in school curricula to reduce sex-typification of roles, interests and occupations among boys and girls and to inculcate self-worth, aggressiveness and leadership skills in girls.

*Industrial, economic, labour and market policies*,—which include employer behaviour and practices relating to women in the industrial labour force. The area is extremely broad and incorporates policies on equal job opportunities and equal pay ; reduction of discrimination by employers by means of incentives to those who employ women in predefined proportions or quotas based on economic, cultural, educational and other factors affecting the supply of women ; on-the-job provision of



training for women and development of new skills ; incorporation into the working conditions of such factors as working hours, flexibility of location (if and where possible), flexibility of hours, part-time job opportunities, transportation, housing, social flexibility in the industrial environment e.g. physical segregation of sexes etc. ; career development, continuing education for women workers ; introduction of special opportunities for women, economic and social benefits, union participation incentives for self-employment for women ; promotion of women in small-scale industries etc.

5. Since the major aspect of the solution lies in the creation of jobs for women, this should be considered a priority item. In the manufacturing sector, for example, jobs may be increased by policy decisions to initially utilise labour-intensive appropriate or intermediate technologies rather than capital-intensive high technologies, and to select products that require greater labour-intensive methods to produce. Once the labour force is better utilized, better trained and reduced in numbers, the next stage of industrial development will become possible. Small industries could follow much the same philosophy. Medium and small-scale industries, which are less glamorous but crucial for economic development of developing countries, may select products suitable for export and with aggressive entrepreneurship could be responsible for generating much more employment.

The creation of a rural infrastructure becomes necessary to decentralize industrial activity and take jobs and services to where the people are, in their own communities and villages. Non-agricultural employment in rural areas is important, yet factory production should not too easily replace crafts activities. Women need to be provided with the information, scope, facilities and support to be self-employed in areas that feed into the operations of larger industrial projects. The displacement of cottage industries should also be very carefully assessed and should be slowed down to provide sufficient time to develop alternative jobs and sources of income for women.

Improving and utilizing conditions in the rural-agricultural sector to incorporate women into the industrial effort is possible. For example, petty trade conducted by women can be by a pooling of resources, metamorphosed into a better planned medium-scale industry-type operation where the same women can be trained and effectively utilized. The formation of co-operatives would facilitate and encourage the use of women for purposes of greater economic and industrial development. Co-operatives would also be beneficial to women as they assist in teaching and training them, expose them to new experiences and provide increased employment opportunities and income.

The dual role of women, job and family, needs to be seriously considered. Broad social adaptations requiring fundamental changes in industrial policies are required to deal with the issue of changing roles of women and their entry into the industrialization process.

6. All development programmes should include the interests and requirements of both men and women in their planning activities. Therefore in designing projects the following element need to be considered:

- a. Familial structure and roles of members helping or hindering women from working ;
- b. Existing patterns of sexual division of labour in agricultural production and how the project will affect the division of labour within the family ;
- c. Types of labour-saving machinery or technology of greatest assistance to women in providing free time from domestic duties ;
- d. Needs of women workers and needed social services ;
- e. Necessary training required etc.

7. Women should actively participate in political, economic, social and legal organizations, agencies, clubs, community groups (including unions) in order to develop awareness of their needs and goals and encourage and receive support for the implemen-

tation of changes in policies by finding practical solutions to existing problems. Accessibility of women to higher-status, responsible positions at professional, managerial and administrative levels should be improved.

8. Public and private sector industrial enterprises should co-ordinate their policies relating to development of employment and training programmes that include women.

9. *Multinationals* : Foreign-based multinationals should be encouraged to adopt consistent policies favourable to women employees, geared to the long-term economic and industrial needs of the countries in which they operate.

Multinationals should design their investment plans to utilize, on an initial basis, intermediate technology and labour-intensive production methods instead of importing sophisticated high technology machinery which limits local employment opportunities and displaces workers.

Countries attempting to attract multinational manufacturing industries should offer cheap labour, tax incentives, export processing zones etc. but only on condition that requirements for women workers and general labour standards and training for all workers be included in the multinational's policy for purposes of contributing to long term economic development goals.

Stipulations and clauses regarding the training for long-term employment and participation of specified proportion or quotas of women workers at all levels could be incorporated into agreements and contracts to assist in the overall process of industrial development.

## **THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN INDUSTRIALIZATION : MOROCCO**

*Fatima-Zohra Bennani-Baiti*

Education is essential, not only for women but also for men, to develop awareness of the role women can play on an equal basis with men in terms both of jobs and effectiveness in economic development.

In Morocco, the participation of women in the economy in general and in industry in particular is substantial, although it is more often than not ignored and its value remains only partially recognized. The problem is a lack of education. The national illiteracy rate is 76 per cent for all citizens, and for females it is 86 per cent at the national level, and 98 per cent in the rural areas.

Education for women in Morocco was introduced in 1943 when King Mohammed V permitted girls to enter primary school for the first time. Yet, since then, despite sizeable amounts of investment by the Government of Morocco in the field of formal education, only 44 per cent of school-age children are enrolled in primary school while in rural areas enrollment is a mere 14 per cent. At higher ages, enrollment for girls is 15 per cent at the national level, and 5 per cent in rural areas. These statistics become all the more significant considering that 65 per cent of the Moroccan population live in the rural areas.

The development and expansion of the primary school system has been constrained by budgetary considerations and the alarming rate of population growth. The total population of Morocco in 1977 was 18·3 million, of which 45 per cent were under 15 years of age. The annual population growth rate was 3·2 per cent. As a result, the Government has barely been able to increase the number of classrooms and teachers to accommodate the annual increases in population.

The consequences of the lack of educational opportunities for women are shown in the labour market. Semi-literate or illiterate women, however intelligent, are unable to fully participate in the social and economic development of Morocco. Women are now increasingly entering the labour force as substantiated by unemployment statistics. According to official data, the number of women seeking jobs increased tenfold between 1960 and 1971.

Working women account for 25 per cent of the female population, and 37 per cent of the labour force. This female labour force is young, 44 per cent being less than 25 years old and 15 per cent less than 15. These women work in agriculture, animal husbandry, agro-industry, assembly, textile and clothing industries, electricity, electronics, radio, television, accounting etc. In addition, many of them work as civil servants (secretaries) or maids.

Despite the expansion in the formal education programme in Morocco, there is an increasing number of students who "drop out" of the educational system, either through failure to maintain required academic standards or for other reasons. Many of these individuals, possessing some secondary school education, then enter the job market with no saleable skills, leading to unemployment or under-employment. In an effort to accelerate and expand educational and employment opportunities for women, the Government has been searching for informal approaches to education and training that would reach a large segment of the unschooled in both rural and urban areas without overtaxing the national budget. Under the

Ministry of Labour, the Government has established an "Office de Formation Professionnelle et de la Promotion du Travail" (OFFPT), which is responsible for vocational training. The programme is directed at both men and women between the ages of 15 and 20 who have dropped out of the formal school system.

In the summer of 1976, a team of experts from the United States Agency for International Development (AID) recommended that women trainers be allowed to participate in the industrial and commercial training programmes of the Ministry of Labour on an equal basis with men. Areas designated as suitable for women workers were watchmaking, textiles, clothing, cosmetics, leather industries, assembly industries and ceramics. This demonstrates that the Government has been attempting to reduce the serious lack of opportunities for women in education, training and employment. It is assumed that these recommendations will be acted upon by the Government.

#### CURRENT CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN TO INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN MOROCCO

No accurate statistics are available that provide specific data on the participation of Moroccan women in industry. However, the 1971 General Census on Population and Housing gives the participation of women and men in various sectors of the economy (annex). Since 1976, the "Secrétariat d'Etat au Plan et au Développement Régional" and the "Ministère du Commerce et de l'Industrie" have been undertaking surveys each April on employment in the urban areas, and on processing industries. The results of these surveys were not available when this paper was written.

The role of women in industry is exemplified by presenting the current status of women workers in four major industrial sectors where they are most represented.

*Textile and clothing industry* : In Morocco, the textile and

clothing industry is the most modern of all. It utilizes the most sophisticated technology in the field, and is important in the national economy. Until 1970, this industry was not even able to satisfy the demand of the domestic market ; today, it has made such rapid progress that it supplies not only local market demand but is also able to export large quantities to foreign markets and there are still possibilities for expansion.

At present more than 50 per cent of employees in this sector are women (annex). Women occupy, almost exclusively, the lower level jobs that are manual and require continuous concentration. Their wages are from 20 to 30 per cent lower than those paid to men since the income of women is considered as a supplementary financial resource for the family.

The textile industry occupies a very important place in the national economic plan. In view of its capability for export, many programmes are envisaged for increasing and diversifying production. To implement these, women will have to play a larger role and new training and vocational programmes will have to be established for them. Women will also have to overcome the social and cultural constraints preventing them from participating in the decision-making processes. This is legally possible as according to the law and Constitution, women have the right to undertake independent business activities without the permission or intervention of any man. In practice, however, this does not occur because women have been brought up to believe that they are weak, that their principal tasks are to procreate and care for children and to be housewives. Business is conceived as a male enterprise. These attitudes and stereotypes will have to change if production is to be increased.

Since 1971, when more women entered the textile sector, the quality of production has improved. Thus, the Government is optimistic about expanding and developing this sector, and in order to promote it further, an institutional framework has been created to train experts and favour the import of new technology. No specific programmes or plans are envisaged for women but

to develop this sector, women, who constitute more than 50 per cent of its human resources, should be deeply involved in the technological developmental areas. This can be achieved by training them, providing them with greater access to higher level jobs, creating facilities for mothers, giving them special credit facilities, and organizing their work in such a way that they benefit from the technology. They should also be encouraged to join and participate in trade unions. In morocco, very few women participate in the unions, and even when they do they are passive members.

The strategy of the Ministry of Industry to integrate women into this sector is to create more job-producing manufacturing enterprises and to expand educational and vocational programmes for women. This would increase both supply and related investment and would help to evolve a better strategy for industrial development.

At present, only three firms in the entire textile sector can boast women as their heads (Prèsident Directeur Gèneral). The author interviewed one of these women, who is well aware of the problems encountered by women in her position. These problems are both economic and social and originate in the traditional, orthodox values of a developing society. The crucial problem in this firm, for example, is the lack of adequately trained people. Of the 80 persons employed, about half are women, and some of them are entrusted with responsible positions. Women have been found to be more serious about their work, sometimes more competent, and they exhibit a lower rate of absenteeism than men. They are paid an equal basis with men.

Upon entry, all the workers receive three months accelerated general training, and polyvalent workers receive six months training. A minimum level of education is mandatory.

The women are between the ages of 18 and 30 and one of the major problems encountered is that they tend to leave after marriage. This turnover inhibits continuity in the work and training is wasted.



*Food-processing industry* : Within the food-processing industry, women undertake seasonal or temporary activities particularly in the fruit, vegetable and fish-canning factories. In this sector women generally find employment more easily because (a) they are willing to accept low wages ; (b) men do not like low level jobs ; and (c) men generally do not, accept seasonal work. Thus sex-segregation in work applies to this sector. These activities are considered suitable for women since they are repetitive, and require patience and concentration.

Where fruits and vegetables are concerned, the workers are responsible for peeling and canning ; for fish, women work in the sardine factories, and elsewhere. Thus 80 to 90 per cent of seasonal workers in canning factories are women. A high percentage of workers in the mineral water factories are also women. Conversely, mostly men are employed in the sugar industry because the work is hard and laborious.

Work in these factories is primarily manual, which does not require any special training. This encourages the use of extremely cheap labour, which lowers production costs.

The existing permanent positions are generally filled by men, though some in the lowest categories are filled by women.

At the administrative and decision-making levels of food-processing factories men predominate. Despite the fact that there are now increasing numbers of women engineers and research workers, the proportion of women at high levels remains very low.

Improvements in equipment and technology in the food-processing factories would result in all workers being permanently employed, thereby eliminating the seasonal aspect of this industry.

The people employed in the food processing industry are forced to remain marginal as the workers do not or cannot participate in or adapt to changing technology. Moreover, the Moroccan woman worker is not aware of her participation in work being a contributory factor in the economic and social

life of the country. Earning the necessary income for the family is the exclusive prerogative of men. The traditional division of labour is still maintained and defines the power relationships within the family : "He who earns the money makes the law".

*Electrical, electronic and mechanical industries* : Generally, the mechanical areas of industry are reserved for men. These sectors do not correspond to women's activities. e.g. the steel foundry, yet there are activities even within these sectors that can be developed with the participation of women, for example small-assembly units. Small electronic industries or assembly industries for television, radio, computers, aeroplanes, cars, small electrical parts that require fineness, dexterity and continuous concentration are seen as particularly suitable for women. Of the workers in industries of this kind, 80 to 90 per cent are women, most being between 18 and 24 years old.

The heads of assembly industries have found that not only is the productivity rate of women far higher than that of men, but that women learn their job very quickly and with ease. This is explained by the fact that women have more dexterity, are more dedicated to their work and are very attentive. The rate of absenteeism, again, is lower than that of men. Women are also more meticulous in following instructions. It is believed that the progress and growth that has been achieved in the field of small electronics industries in the space of three years could not have been achieved in ten years without the participation of women.

In the first six months, workers receive general training followed by six months of work under close supervision. As in other industries the biggest problems are the difficulty of finding literate people and women leaving their jobs when they get married. An additional problem has been related to night work. These firms have had to cease operating night shifts because Morocco has signed the I L O convention prohibiting women from working during the night hours. This is believed to be a significant obstacle to the development of a number

of projects in electronics in which night work is necessary. Space and time constraints limit a discussion here of the issue of whether women should work during the night.

Despite the fact that women actively participate in this sector and produce a high output, there are no adequate, organized, specific training programmes accessible to all interested women.

*Chemical and para-medical industries* : The participation of women in this sector is virtually non-existent. In theory, recruiting policies are the same for women and men, but because of traditional factors and the nature and quality of the jobs, this sector is almost exclusively reserved for men. In general, whenever women are employed, their wages run 20 to 30 per cent lower than those of men.

The differential levels of participation of women in the various branches of this sector are presented below :

<i>Industry</i>	<i>Percentage of women employed</i>
Pharmaceutical	80, most of them in low categories
Paper and pasteboard	40
Matches	
Rubber and tyre	
Heavy chemical (fertilizers, chemical products etc.)	Almost zero
Paint	
Building equipment, Wood	

It is necessary to analyse these industries and make recommendations for more equitable participation of women in all sectors.

#### MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN THE CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN MOROCCO

*Major constraints in achieving effective participation of women in industrialization* : It is generally believed that there are sectors of industry, particularly the heavy industries, that are exclusively for men ; in fact, women can participate effectively

in all sectors and at all levels of industry. The expansion and spread of the total benefits of technology should be made available to women by making their participation easier and by using innovative techniques and modified technologies to include women to a greater extent in the industrialization process.

Despite women's seemingly greater aptitude for certain types of work, e.g. electronics and clothing, severe constraints exist that inhibit their employment in industry. First, there is the lack of education, which is a crucial factor. Secondly, there are the orthodox cultural attitudes and social values relating to women. Moroccan women, even though educated and heading families, are never able to reach full emancipation. They inevitably require male authorization to undertake economic activities, for example, although according to the law a woman has the right to undertake business freely without the intervention of a man, she in fact requires male authorization (her husband, brother or tutor) even to get a passport. Thus it is impossible for a woman to run an export business without male permission since this necessitates travelling abroad. The third constraint affecting the participation of women in industrial work is that their husbands may prevent them from working when they get married.

In spite of these constraints, women have, particularly in the last five years, been learning a variety of industrial jobs and trying by various means to work. The effects of inflation, the increasing needs of people and the evolution of the modern economy have resulted in women's earnings becoming a crucial contribution to the maintenance of the home and to the economic and social self-sufficiency of the family unit, which requires the consolidation and strengthening of the contribution of women in the industrial development process.

*National policy and planning relating to the effective of women :* Priority in national policy and planning should be given to the education of women. The Government should provide young women with training that is geared to employ-

ment requirements in the modern sector. In particular, non-formal educational programmes and vocational and technical training for women should be developed and expanded. The "Office de Formation Professionnelle et de la Promotion du Travail" (OFPPPT) is the most appropriate governmental department to promote the expansion of non-formal educational training in Morocco.

The OFPPPT was established in 1974 when the Ministry of Labour was given the responsibility for organizing and administering vocational training programmes recruiting and training instructors, and ascertaining manpower needs in industry and commerce. This office is assisted by a council representing employers, workers and government officials and is financed by a 1 per cent wage tax levied on industrial and commercial firms.

The OFPPPT should be expanded in order to design programmes and establish "Centres de Formation et de Qualification Professionnelle" for women on a par with those existing for men. These centres should be geared to developing needed skills for employment in a rapidly expanding labour pool of men and women. The programmes should focus on providing women with increased opportunities to secure employment as skilled workers in the industrial and commercial sectors of the economy.

Currently there are 33 Centres de Formation et Qualification Professionnelle in Morocco. They were initially the responsibility of the "Chambre de Commerce" but are now co-ordinated by the Ministry of Labour. According to prospectuses issued by OFPPPT, the curricula and areas of specialization provided are consonant with labour-market demands and with the structure of production in both the public and private sectors. All trainees are granted scholarships during their training periods. In practice, the OFPPPT tends to discriminate against women. The following passage from an interim AID report dated 7 March 1978 on the project *Industrial and Commercial Job Training for Women* confirms that :

Unfortunately, AID's evaluation found that in practice OFPPT discriminated against women. The training of women is restricted to the commercial sector. Women have access only to training courses in typing, shorthand, book-keeping and accounting. In fact, commercial training in all but the last are exclusively female. Although training in accountancy is mixed, it is in fact heavily dominated by males. Other signs of male favoritism were noted in the provision of dormitory facilities and in the placement of graduates.

The Ministry of Labour, under whose jurisdiction falls OFPPT, reacted defensively to this point in AID's evaluation. It was stated that the current sex-selective training programmes were not purposefully exclusive but resulted from a disinterest or reluctance on the part of Moroccan women themselves to seek admission to the industrial courses. In principle, the government of Morocco is for the integration of the sexes in the training programme and also in the labour market itself.

In spite of this protestation, however, the Labour Ministry did recognize its problem in this regard and requested AID to collaborate with OFPPT in establishing a pilot programme for the training of women in industry-related areas. This special intervention would serve as a model for the promotion of industrial training and employment for women. Eventually the replication of the pilot programme would culminate in the integration of women throughout the OFPPT system. Ultimately the objectives of this pilot effort would be to integrate women into the industrial sector and not to perpetuate a sex-segregated labour market.

This indicates that the government is willing to integrate women in industry, and programmes should be improved and multilateral or bilateral projects redesigned in order to achieve this objective. UNIDO for example could participate by promoting similar projects in conjunction with AID or other

agencies. In Casablanca the existing UNDP/UNIDO project "Assistance a l'Institut Marocain de l'Emballage et du Conditionnement (IMEC)," Packing and Packaging Centre, could become an important pilot project if programmes for the effective participation of women were implemented. This would be particularly appropriate since the international project coordinator is a woman. Furthermore, it is a large-scale project that may well have a regional impact in the near future. Thus, the Institute could design women's programmes with the collaboration of surrounding developing countries. Women with higher education should be involved in the development of such programmes. One such programme could be to assist the government in creating a women's industrial promotion and information service within the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. This service would be designed and organized to provide women with access to information on existing and forthcoming industrial opportunities for them with regard to education, skill and vocational training, possibilities of employment unions etc. This is very important because it would oblige the authorities to take into consideration women's programmes, and would make people, especially women, aware of their rights, which, at present, is not the case for most of them.

In addition, pamphlets or brochures publicizing basic information on the strengths of women workers, i.e. their work capacity, perseverance concentration and dexterity would help to reduce male prejudices and stereotypes regarding women, especially in the areas of absenteeism, pregnancy etc., and to encourage employers to employ women. Governmental incentives could include benefits to those who employ women. In the case of trade unions, women should be informed and encouraged to participate in them, and the unions should be encouraged to seek women members.

UNIDO might also consider providing high level industrial training for women abroad in a variety of industrial fields. The need for foreign training is due to the lack of sufficient training

centres and the opportunity of being exposed to and informed on new technology, which does not exist in Morocco. Such training would be useful when Morocco acquires the necessary infrastructure to accommodate it.

Apart from training abroad, there are already three middle-level training institutions, two of them created with the assistance of UNDP and ILO. These Centres train teachers in various industrial skills and their programmes should be expanded to include women. They should also be copied throughout the whole country.

As for the non-formal educational programmes for women, Morocco has five separate types to which Moroccan women have access sponsored by nation wide centres :

Foyers Feminins |  
Ouvroirs | (reserved exclusively for female adolescents)

Handicraft training centres

Industrial and Commercial Training Centres (OFPPT)

Training hotel centres

These programmes, and especially the first two, should include modern industrial training for women and not limit themselves to dispensing training in home economics for women such as cooking, knitting, sewing and some superficial family planning courses.



*Number of Employees in the Main Economic Activities*

<i>Economic activity</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>
Fishing	13,756	494	14,250
Forestry, gathering of uncultivated materials, hunting	15,420	2,882	18,302
Agriculture	1,460,631	130,893	1,591,524
Livestock production	267,048	71,685	338,733
Activities related to agriculture	44,347	6,658	51,005
Electricity, water	10,375	784	11,159
National production : oil, fuels, solid minerals	9,696	325	10,021
Mining and preparation of minerals and ores	34,509	1,495	36,004
Metal processing: manu- facture of intermediate, capital and consumer goods, repairs	75,258	3,591	78,839
Construction materials, ceramics and glass, build- ings and public works	181,668	3,986	185,654
Chemical, pharmaceuti- cal and related industries, rubber and asbestos	7,068	932	8,000
Food industries, beverages, tobacco, fats industry	50,660	14,976	65,636
Textiles and apparel	75,985	78,194	154,179
Leather and footwear	33,557	1,882	35,439
Wood and furniture	31,019	4,762	35,781

<i>Economic activity</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>
Paper and cardboard, printing, press and publishing	6,815	733	7,548
Transport and communications	100,582	4,581	105,163
Trade	255,399	15,664	271,063
Hotels and restaurants	22,387	4,329	26,716
Allied trade and industrial services	1,957	676	2,633
Real estate	2,909	272	3,181
Domestic services	27,726	102,974	130,700
Health services	18,623	3,830	22,453
Other services (including youth and sports)	65,632	17,249	86,881
Administration	246,716	28,473	275,189
Other activities not elsewhere classified	166,550	57,174	223,724
Total	3,226,293	559,494	3,789,777

*Source : Based on General Census on Population and Housing, Morocco, 1972, vol. II. p. 76.*

## CONSTRAINTS

*Indira Subramaniam*

### RAPID POPULATION GROWTH

Rapid population growth is the greatest single factor inhibiting economic and social advancement in developing countries. It exacerbates the problems of unemployment, poverty, congestion and unequal distribution of food and income. Women, particularly, are made vulnerable by this factor as it perpetuates an environment unfavourable to the entry of women into the economic development process.

During the last quarter of a century, i.e. 1950 to 1975, rapid population growth has resulted in the number of working women being more than doubled. By the year 2000, there will be more than 800 million women workers, more than half the increase occurring in Asia.

The reason for the rapid growth of population is declining death rates rather than increasing birth rates. Improved medical knowledge has reduced deaths by disease and infection and increased the survival rate of children. However, traditional attitudes towards childbearing persist; women as well as men regard children, especially sons, as status symbols and as security in old age, particularly in societies where social security, old-age benefits and savings are virtually unknown. Thus children are still produced at the rate they were when it was

expected that only a few out of the many would survive.

Rapid population growth creates a surplus labour force that raises unemployment levels and reduces work opportunities available to the individual. Also, as economic growth cannot keep pace with rapid population growth, all too often scarce benefit are unequally distributed, going to affluent small segments of the population while large segments continue in poverty. Large families therefore help to perpetuate poverty and inequality in many societies.

In addition, high fertility removes women from direct economic production as it prevents them from entering the labour force due to the excessive burden of familial responsibilities. Limited familial resources are utilized for males in preference to females as the former are expected to become major supporters of families, while female children are kept at home to help already overburdened mothers and thereby prevented from acquiring education or skills. Lack of such education, early marriages, and familial, religious and community pressures perpetuate the status quo.

The more affluent developed countries have lower birth rates than the poorer developing countries, and the elites of developing countries have lower rates than the poor of those countries. As birth rates decline, female health and longevity improve, the ages at marriage rise and educational levels rise all of which are conducive to women undertaking non domestic economic activities.

Women need to be provided with rewarding alternatives to reproduction in the form of employment and incomes. That alternatives to childbearing are available stemming from remunerative, non-domestic employment is unknown to many of the illiterate, urban and rural poor. Even when women are able and willing to work, the existing economic, occupational and industrial structures are geared to benefit males, and severely limit available opportunities for women who are therefore driven, by economic necessity, to undertake unrewarding

and exploitative work.

Increasing numbers of women entering the labour force will increase real earned income of households and lead to economic and social changes such as increased consumption and improved standards of living, increased economic production to satisfy demand, and reduced competition in the industrial market-place as surplus labour-force numbers decline—all of which increase the need for economic opportunities for women. The argument that when a surplus population, and consequently a surplus labour force, exists, the priority for employment should be given to men is simplistic as it attempts to solve a fundamental problem with a temporary measure that protects the interests of those in power. Nor does this argument take into consideration the long-term disadvantages of a purely male orientation that relegates women (often more than 50 per cent of a national population) to a secondary position, thereby perpetuating all the factors that create rapid population growth, i.e. lack of education, lack of economic opportunity, detrimental attitudes etc. These, in turn, perpetuate poverty and unemployment.

The growth of population, which affects the economic and social position of women, must be taken into account in all industrial development planning. Economic growth and development cannot be obtained until women have equal access to education, work, income and leisure.

#### SOCIAL AND CULTURAL TRADITIONS

Social inequality is reflected in the differential distribution of economic, social and political power between women and men, the consequences of which are more apparent in the developing nations. Many of these disparities stem from social traditions and cultural beliefs that have influenced the employment of women outside the domestic sphere by creating obstacles to their participation in economic production. The

persistence of outmoded cultural traditions influences two major issues related to the participation of women in economic development : sex-segregation of work and the dual responsibilities of women workers as homemakers and earners.

*Sex-segregation* : Regardless of the economic structure of a society or its level of development, there is an unequal division of labour between the sexes based upon sex-segregation and sex-typification of jobs. While these discriminatory tendencies are social and psychological, their origins are to be found in cultural tradition, historical experience, economic rationalization and legal justification. For example, women throughout the world are forbidden by law to undertake jobs that are "unhealthy, arduous or immoral..." On the other hand, there are no laws that justify the fact that more men fill supervisory positions requiring higher qualification, while women with similar qualifications perform less skilled jobs.

In most societies the dominant traditional occupation of women has been that of homemaker, and remains so. Many people, including women, disapprove of women working outside the home especially if they are wives and mothers. The acceptance of unmarried adult females in the work world is somewhat better because it is believed to be temporary, until they marry.

Most women fill low skilled jobs with low productivity generating low income. These are often dead-end jobs, physically hard and exploitative with no job security, requiring long hours of work and with hazardous working conditions. Sex-segregation is common and most women work in occupations dominated by women. Educated women play an insignificant role in industry as their proportions in managerial and technical positions are negligible ; they often refuse to undertake lower-level jobs and thus remain under-utilized.

Women are believed to possess aptitudes for certain types of work. Many employers and policy-makers believe that women are particularly suited for jobs requiring higher levels of manual dexterity and utilize them in electronics assembly, ignoring the

fact that some of the world's best surgeons and technicians are men who require as much, if not more, manual dexterity than women for the jobs they perform. However, given similar aptitudes, most of the higher status jobs are filled by men and the lower ones by women. Most of the jobs filled by women are highly repetitive, monotonous, unskilled and ill paid. The belief that women are better able to cope with these conditions is erroneous according to the findings of numerous research studies on this subject undertaken in developed countries. Women suffer boredom, frustration and dissatisfaction as much as men, their productivity declines due to errors from repetition or monotony as it does among men but they are unable to complain as much because they are working out of necessity and often have no support from unions, employers, husbands or families because of their subservient position.

An additional disparity between women and men is that women often receive lower wages than men for work of equal skill levels and importance. For example, there are wide disparities in salaries paid to women and men for identical work. Even though the principle of equal pay for equal work exists in the legislation of most countries, its application is not easily enforceable because of loopholes in the legislation. Furthermore, the institutional structure that should provide women with access to all jobs and with adequate wages is often lacking.

Women, therefore, remain a vulnerable segment of the labour force. They are economically unstable due to lack of skills and education, lack of job security, and low levels of unionization in most developing countries. This is due in part to their familial responsibilities that influence their work histories adding to stereotypes of absenteeism, high turn over rates and general unreliability as industrial workers. Women are particularly vulnerable to changes in economic conditions as they are considered expendable in times of recession and as a "labour reservoir" in times of economic expansion or social and political upheaval such as war. This is based on the

fallacious argument that women can be reabsorbed into the family if laid-off, while men are the supporters of the family and therefore require continuous employment. That increasing numbers of women are heads of households because of rural-urban migration (of males as in Asia or of females as in Latin America), with the resulting break-up of the family unit, or because of death, divorce or desertion of supporting males, is often not taken into account.

Social attitudes that differentiate men's work from women's work are based on traditional agrarian, economic and social conditions, which, however, sometimes change. For example, in the post-colonial period, higher echelon jobs originally filled by colonizers became available to the indigenous population. These positions were generally filled by men who moved up the educational ladder to enter positions previously beyond their reach. Women then experienced some improvement in access to lower and middle echelon jobs along with men and started entering the labour force in increasing numbers. This sometimes resulted in the proportions of men and women in certain job sectors being reversed, e.g. in manufacturing, manual labour, some clerical areas etc., and predominantly male jobs became either more balanced in their sexual component or predominantly female. This demonstrates that with the proper impetus, changes can and do take place.

*Dual responsibilities of women :* While developed countries are still in the throes of creating and expanding supporting services for working women, the developing countries have little or no built-in infrastructure to assist and encourage women to undertake work outside the home.

This lack of supportive social services is generally recognized. It is indicated in an ILO survey that "...the basic needs in these countries are often so serious that any measures taken for women workers tend to be purely protective and concentrate on the more general aspects of their conditions of work and life."

The debate on whether it is better for women to work or



be housewives and mothers is meaningless in the case of most women in developing countries who are compelled to work by economic necessity.

The care of children and households in developing countries are burdens often carried solely by women without the institutional, marital or technological support that are more easily available in the developed countries. Paradoxically, women from extended families where household assistance is available in the form of resident unemployed older females usually do not work outside the home, owing to traditional antipathy to such work, while women from nuclear family units where kin are not readily available to fill domestic roles work outside the home. Developing countries have few organized child-care services, health care facilities or other facilities whereby women can obtain some assistance to free them for work. Factories often do not maintain such facilities or services or even involve themselves with these issues by providing financial assistance to women requiring such services. Tradition and custom keep husbands unaware of the help that their working wives need with child-care and other domestic activities. Added to this is the lack of labour-saving devices for the poorer working woman, which increases her burden and reduces her free time to almost nothing. Combined, these factors make the lot of working women almost unbearable and effectively discourage many from undertaking full-time remunerative employment.

Legislation exists to protect women but often serves to reinforce familial, traditional roles and perpetuate inequality with men. For example, some countries still dismiss women in the event of pregnancy. Women are not provided with the option to work given certain circumstances and yet should be able to make their own decisions as men do. Protection helps to increase exploitation of women if geared only to women and not to all workers.

Poor health, household responsibilities and child-care are basic impediments to women performing effectively on the job.

Women need to be freed from time and energy consuming tasks that prevent them from taking advantage of education, training and gainful employment. An increase of two earner-households in economies with high dependency ratios would undoubtedly assist in improving standards of living.

All too often, working women are viewed as supplementary wage-earners and are considered relatively unimportant when it comes to planning for the satisfaction of needs. Working women, it is often argued, lead to instability of the family as work, money and status make a woman too independent, and men often see this as a threat to domestic dominance and as a negative reflection of their ability to provide for the family. Such illogical rationalizations are particularly prevalent among the poor, where men would rather keep their women pregnant than working in order to maintain their position in the eyes of their peers as successful providers of large families. However, this attitude only serves to perpetuate their poverty.

The neglect by national agencies to consider and analyse the current position of women in the family, at work and in society stems from an institutionalized bias in favour of men that pervades all areas of planning and policy-making. Even if policies are formulated that are conducive to women's needs and goals, and even if appropriate legislation exists, there continues to be a large gap between policy and legislation on the one hand and enforcement on the other, and this perpetuates the preferential treatment given to males in most societies.

There is therefore a need to change attitudes towards women and to create an awareness through education and the mass media that women do not need to be economic or social appendages of their fathers, husbands or sons, and to dispel the notion that women are ornaments, child-bearers and household managers. It should be repeatedly stressed that women are independent human beings, capable of valuable, productive work that is beneficial to the economy of the nation and that their being involved in work and in non-domestic economic production will not

adversely affect the institutions of family, marriage, community and religion.

If the traditional ideas that hamper women's participation in industrialization can be modified or eliminated, it will be possible to develop new roles for women and men in sharing responsibilities both within and outside the family ; to open up new types of jobs for both women and men ; to avoid those technological choices that restrict women to traditional household chores ; and to create new institutions that can improve the economic condition and quality of life for women and men, adults and children, in all societies.

#### EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Human resources help to accumulate capital, exploit natural resources and build social, economic and political organizations necessary for economic development. A country that neglects to develop the skills and knowledge of its entire population and utilize them effectively in the national economy is unlikely, in the long run, to develop anything else.

Human resource problems in developing countries are related to underdevelopment and under-utilization of skills stemming from historical and traditional constraints and the resulting economic, social and legal policies. Human resource policies should be aimed at maximum feasible development of work-oriented and skill-related capacities of people including a relationship between overall economic and educational policies. Human capital formation is not only a continuing but also a lifetime process. However, development of skills is an insufficient condition for economic progress as there is an urgent need as well to create complementary opportunities for the population.

The high illiteracy rates for women is one of the major obstacles to their effective participation in the industrialization process ; in some countries, particularly in rural areas, female illiteracy exceeds 90 per cent. Modern technology not only

reduces the number of jobs, but also requires higher levels of skill to fill the ones that are available. More men than women possess these skills as few women have the opportunity to acquire them.

Education and training in developing countries consist of formal education, which takes place in schools and is geared to training students for urban jobs ; informal education or on-the-job training, which takes place outside of school, at home, on farms and in factories, where learning by doing is an important element ; and non-formal education, which is organized learning outside of school, such as agricultural extension courses and adult training classes. The latter two methods are often neglected or are considered less prestigious than formal education.

Some developing countries have focused on formal education, which has produced a high proportion of high school and university graduates that local economies often cannot absorb or utilize effectively. On the other hand, other segments of the population, particularly women and the poor, have been neglected. Therefore, despite an urban surplus of educated people and a rural surplus of semi-skilled and unskilled people, there is a shortage of highly skilled labour. Other countries have focused on non-formal education and training, attempting to incorporate larger segments of the population into the industrial work force by raising basic skill levels. This has led to a shortage of highly skilled manpower.

Education and training are often determined by political and economic institutions and are, in some cases, instruments of economic and social stratification rather than mechanisms for increasing equality. In most developing countries education and training are not geared to the interests of the disadvantaged and the poor, and women are often the most adversely affected. Outmoded academic curricula persist as they were originally set up by colonial regimes to reinforce the existing power structures ; vocational training is ignored because it does not directly affect the interests of small elite groups. In a few coun-

tries, education and training policies are geared to the elimination of poverty. However, even in these countries, male interests still predominate. Thus, attitudinal, ideological and structural transformations are required at economic, social and legal levels if changes in this area are to be effective. Teachers, planners and policy-makers are all part of this scheme of things and radical restructuring and reorientation is also required among these groups in order to effect changes.

If women are to improve their position in the industrial work force, they require easier access to all forms of education and training. At present, they face discrimination by circumstance or intent and this perpetuates sexual inequalities in jobs, power and personal relations. The scarcity of resources among the rural and urban poor often involves a choice of providing an education for boys as opposed to girls. Boys get priority since they are believed to be better investments, while girls are kept at home to assist mothers who work or they are married off at the earliest possible time.

Expansion and restructuring of the educational system must occur within the overall national economic framework. In Colombia, for example, some schools offer a new programme with options in industrial agricultural and commercial subjects that are geared to economic needs. Students have the choice of being prepared for employment, further technical training or university.

Women who gain access to education are more frequently from the elites and the middle classes of developing countries. For example, in Peru the limitations imposed on women are disappearing, breaking the traditional psychological mould of dependency and allowing women to enter the centres of higher education and technical training generally reserved for men. Thus, increasing numbers of women are being prepared for technical careers in engineering, social and economic sciences, administration and research. At medium levels there is also some attempt to provide training for instructors, small and

medium-scale entrepreneurs etc. through participation in the National Services of Industrial Technology (SENATI). These women, however, still do not have access to commensurate jobs and are usually relegated to subordinate positions or remain unemployed. This is not uncommon throughout the developing world as is apparent also in Sri Lanka where free education has led to a 72 per cent literacy rate among women compared to 85 per cent among men, yet the ever-increasing problem of unemployed educated youth has a retrograde and undesirable effect on job opportunities for women in a vulnerable and shrinking labour market.

Education is one of the principal mechanisms by which women's inequality can be reduced. From the earliest pre-school years, females and males need to be instructed on equality of the sexes, the role women can play in the industrial development process, the economic and social benefits that accrue to households where women work, women as family and nation builders, viable alternatives to childbearing for women, health, nutrition and fertility, and the place of women in the community, society and world. Education can serve to dispel myths about women, thereby reducing the negative influences of traditions.

Educational reform can also include designing curricula to promote equal development of skills of women and men ; educating parents as well as children, husbands as well as wives to bridge the generation gap and reduce sexual inequalities ; developing rationality in attitudes towards sex and procreation ; informing men and women of laws and opportunities that affect them in various ways ; developing leadership abilities among both girls and boys ; and creating awareness of the role of both women and men in the overall national economic development plan.

If the limitations affecting women are to be overcome, women themselves must be informed through the creation of a system for the dissemination of relevant economic and industrial,

financial and vocational information to expand the career prospects of the female population and assist them to know their rights and their obligations relating to work and society. Education therefore acts as a consciousness-raising mechanism that affects public opinion and exerts far-reaching beneficial influences upon attitudes towards women.

National policies relating to the education of both women and men should be concerned with the correction of the imbalance between the educational levels of women and men. The high illiteracy rates of women need to be reduced to enable women to acquire usable skills for industrial work at all levels. Increased and expanded non-formal training programmes are required to develop and upgrade the skills of women, including non-traditional middle-level skills. Women, particularly in rural areas, need to be educated on how to use existing skills to generate income and develop the self-reliance that would be beneficial to themselves and their families, and to be informed of the effects of new technologies and provided with the re-training necessary to adjust to these changes.

Curricula should be reviewed and irrelevant or outmoded segments replaced by new, practical and usable areas including scientific and technical subjects that would benefit both women and men and would reduce disparities between education and employment by matching skills and knowledge to available or projected jobs. To achieve this, educational planning requires the training or retraining of qualified instructors to cope with the new systems. Also, educational facilities are urgently needed in rural areas and adequate incentives should be provided to urban middle-class teachers, trained workers, particularly in rural areas, could be provided with incentives to share experiences and commence basic levels of training for rural populations until instructors became available.

Additionally, facilities and opportunities for retraining workers, both female and male, should be provided in order for workers to function as effectively as possible. Innovations and

progress in technology are important aspects of industrial development. However, any introduction or evolution of new appropriate technologies in developing countries must take into account the adaptation of workers to technological developments. Women, particularly, should have access to these retraining facilities in order to keep abreast of developments and avoid reversion to unemployment or deficient production by becoming victims of technological obsolescence.

In formal education, steps should be taken to reduce drop-out rates of females at the primary level through various financial incentives to parents, spouses or guardians ; to make education more accessible to females by provision of adequate transportation and protection, and by creating segregated schools in societies with strong traditions that discourage integration of the sexes ; to make school hours flexible and school location convenient ; to provide earning and learning opportunities ; to make curricula relevant to local needs ; to subsidize educational costs ; to develop supportive legislation etc. so that women are encouraged to obtain education valuable to them, their communities and society.

By being provided with education, skills and an attitudinal framework, women can be given an opportunity to become independent entrepreneurs or self-employed. Self-employment is a major potential and existing source of income and economic productivity for women in many developing countries. In order to undertake this type of economic activity, women must be not only literate but instructed in basic management, marketing, financing, consumption patterns and technical training related to their product or service.

Thus, a variety of educational and training programmes and job-orientation courses for women need to be established in rural and depressed areas, while in urban areas of vocational, managerial and production training is required for entrepreneurs and personnel at all levels in large-scale industrial concerns. International agencies and governments can assist by creating



special funds or setting aside proportions of their budgets for education and training for the development of disadvantaged populations. International agencies could provide support for national education policies and programmes beneficial to women by undertaking research and providing interested developing countries with relevant data and even audio-visual materials for improving training techniques for industrial jobs. They could also set up forums where women could provide input into policy-making and planning relating to training in co-operatives, entrepreneurship, skills for refugees and migrants etc. in conjunction with the creation of job opportunities. The relationship between education, population and employment must be considered if educational programmes are to contribute to economic development programmes.

#### **WOMEN IN THE OCCUPATIONAL HIERARCHY**

The process of industrialization in both rural and urban areas involves, in both public and private sectors, (a) policy makers, decision makers, planners and entrepreneurs at the apex of the occupational hierarchy ; (b) implementors, generally in the middle levels, such as civil service administrators, managers and group leaders, who implement policies, devise strategies to achieve goals and provide feedback to the policy makers with the aid of experts including scientists, engineers, economists, educators, technicians, social scientists, social workers etc. ; and (c) skilled and unskilled workers.

The various levels are interdependent but are also important in their own right.

Ways and means have to be devised by legislation to involve women at all levels of the socio-economic and occupational structure in matters that directly affect them. They should have the dual task of performing their work and assisting and increasing, wherever and whenever possible, the effective participation of women in industrial development. It is therefore necessary for

all national programmes and economic plans to be evaluated and reviewed by women's groups, women's leaders, women's commissions etc. If these do not exist, they should be created in order to provide advice to the incumbent male administrators and government decision makers who may not be aware of the needs of women workers and their problems in the industrial labour force.

Women's groups or influential and knowledgeable women are necessary to provide crucial data to governments and international organizations on the achievements, capabilities and aspirations of women as well as to identify the major obstacles that prevent women from being effectively utilized in industrial development. They can strengthen the position of women by unity and organization, and act as consciousness-raising mechanisms and pressure groups. Women's groups should also be available to educate various community groups, by informal means, on the possible roles of women in the industrialization process and the economic and social benefits that could accrue from their participation in non domestic or non-agricultural work. Influential women, opinion leaders and representatives of women workers' groups can advocate and lobby for amendments to legislation beneficial to women, particularly in the areas of financing and credit availability.

Decision makers at the national level should be encouraged to identify resources, and formulate programmes geared to the integration of women into the industrial development process. Inducements should be offered to policy makers to persuade them to overcome biases and integrate women into the industrialisation process at their own level. If possible, the proportion of women at this level should be increased so that a positive influence can be exerted upon all policy makers. International agencies could assist by preparing relevant studies and holding international seminars at which a direct exchange of information between developing countries could take place. This would serve to sensitize policy makers to the magnitude

and ramifications of the entire issue. In addition, international agencies themselves would be more effective if they increased the proportion of women in senior positions within their own organizations.

*Policy level* : The inadequate representation of women in the upper echelons of the occupational structure is virtually universal and is one of the major constraints on changes that would improve the position of women at all levels of industrial work. Even developed countries have not succeeded in alleviating this situation ; for example, the bill on the Equal Rights Amendment is still not ratified by the United States Congress, and the Equal Employment Opportunities Act is not easily enforceable. Generally, men continue to retain their positions of power often using such rationalizations to support their position as calling women "unqualified", "inexperienced", "unreliable", "emotional" and therefore "unsuited for decision-making positions." Women are often ignorant of available opportunities and are shuttled about in various jobs, effectively side-tracked into positions with status but no power or are kept out of the informal power structures of an organization where many decisions are made. Women are expected to care for families instead of "meddling in affairs that do not concern them." In developing countries any changes required should be effected during the initial stages of industrialization when related social and economic structures and psychological or cultural attitudes are also changing.

The representation of women at the policy-making level is crucial as such women can engender changes in social and economic policies involving legislation, restructuring of industry or management, choice of appropriate technologies, development of entrepreneurship, training and education for industrial occupations, programme development for rural industrialization etc. Policy-making positions available to women in urban, large-scale industries are virtually non-existent. Even though educated and trained women are available, they are either unutilized or

under-utilized in the labour force. The opportunities for women at this level are much better in small and medium scale industries, which are able to utilize women more effectively, especially in rural areas.

The primary sources from which women can be drawn for policy-making positions are universities, colleges and vocational schools, since there is usually a direct link between educational achievement of women and the desire for access to these positions.

Access to privileged positions and upward mobility for women is extremely difficult to achieve despite the removal of legislative and cultural constraints. There is often no question of competence for women have proved themselves repeatedly, yet traditional biases and attitudes continue to present obstacles. In some of the more traditional societies where educational achievement of women is generally much lower than that of men, and where social legislation often requires male authorization for women to work outside the home, almost no women are represented in the policy-making echelons of industry. Even in societies such as India, where there are a relatively large number of women with appropriate qualifications to fill these positions, only 0.1 per cent of upper-level managerial posts in the public and private sectors are filled by women, while 48 per cent of the unskilled jobs are filled by them. However, in some developing countries, such as the Philippines and the United Republic of Tanzania, there is evidence that the number of women in policy-making areas is increasing in both the rural and the urban sectors because of the sustained efforts of women's groups and influential women.

*Implementation level* : The representation of women at middle and senior management and administration levels is most necessary as they are sensitive to, and knowledgeable of, the needs of women workers, types of training required for industrial work, and the cultural, economic, social and psychological supports and constraints that affect women. They are

needed to play the roles of advisers to policy makers by suggesting innovative strategies for the creation of new jobs or the development of appropriate supportive institutional or legislative mechanisms to assist women to enter the work world, or by helping to implement the development of industrial co-operatives to improve the economic position of rural women ; they could also suggest the types of technology, industry or product most beneficial to the local economy and to women. Input by women for women is fundamental to the development of balanced and equitable policies and practices.

The women in middle echelon roles are also potential candidates for the upper levels. Thus the relationship between women at the top and middle levels should be close and the channels of communication should remain open. Women can gain experience in both the public and private sectors of domestic economics as well as at the international level.

*Worker level :* At the skilled and unskilled worker level, women need to be organized into a collective force that will voice the needs of women workers and support and implement beneficial social and economic policies. Female leaders, such as factory managers, technicians and union leaders, are necessary to educate and inform fellow women workers of opportunities and changes in legislation affecting their rights and privileges, and to make them aware of the need for reform in the work environment. It is unlikely that existing male-oriented unions or male factory managers are familiar or deeply concerned with the needs of female workers. The largest proportion of all women involved in industry is at the lowest levels and their strength should lie in their unity. Leaders that emerge from the ranks of women workers are particularly sensitive to the psychological, social and cultural problems of these women, their physical capabilities and occupational aspirations and the barriers they face.

Because of their knowledge and experience of local conditions, women can contribute to industrialization at all levels,

for example, as advisors, consultants and participants in project planning and design. They can participate in chambers of commerce, federations of industries, trade unions and the national civil service to bring about social and economic change. Women can also participate in national, regional and international activities related to industrial development in the form of conferences, publications, forums, research, training and exchange programmes etc. on which the interests of women are focused. Women workers who influence policy making should be particularly well informed if they are to be effective. Workers should be included in all project and development planning activities and their views must be expressed, heard and acted upon if projects and programmes are to be successful. Yet women should not work alone. Most of what has been achieved for working women is a product of legislation designed by men and co-ordination with men is essential not only to achieve desired goals but to avoid creating an economic and social backlash.

#### LEGISLATION

Much industrial legislation in developing countries is borrowed directly from that of ex-colonial countries that are now highly industrialized. In many instances, this legislation is totally inappropriate or inadequate to cope with the cultural traditions and economic framework of developing countries. While the law is generally believed to be objective and a major instrument of social change, particularly in areas where tradition and ideology perpetuate societal inequities, there are numerous factors that prevent it from becoming a potent force in improving the position of women in society. Also, contradictory legislation often exists concurrently, thereby reducing or negating any positive effects that progressive legislation may generate.

A crucial issue is equal pay for equal work. When there is

a high level of male unemployment and severe job competition, this aspect of the law tends to be set aside by the argument that it is difficult to evaluate jobs, i.e. define what "equal work" means. The fact that women most often work in totally "feminized" sectors removes them from sexually integrated work making the issue even more complex in terms of legal interpretation. Are women relatively underpaid or absolutely underpaid? How are comparisons of jobs between man and women to be undertaken and can such criteria as skill, social and economic value and intensity of work be justified as measures of work? Women generally receive less pay than men and their access to the higher echelons of the industrial occupational structure is still severely limited despite legislation of equality of opportunity. Therefore, it is logical to assume that social, economic and industrial legislation relating to women in most countries is either non-existent, inadequate, conflicting or unenforceable.

Legislation to protect women in their roles as wives, mothers and homemakers exists but it is a controversial issue and consensus is difficult to achieve on what it really means for women. It protects them as "weaker", sensitive beings by prohibiting them, for example, from undertaking night-work. This type of legislation in effect prevents women from undertaking economically rewarding labour even if they are ready willing and able and is therefore more repressive than protective.

Protective legislation should be amended and expanded to include not only employment and work related areas but also associated community and family-related issues such as housing, social services, access to ownership, voting, membership in organizations, health, birth control, rehabilitative assistance for widows and protection and aid for single women or female heads of households. There is little protection against desertion, divorce or assault by kin and no guarantees of access to rightful inheritance, social independence and economic independence whereby wages and income do not automatically fall

into the hands of male heads of the households in which women live. Protective legislation should not be limited to women, but should include, where applicable, the protection of men.

Supportive legislation for women that reduces discriminatory practices against them in employment, wages, availability of credit, career mobility, access to education and training is inadequate, as is provision of social welfare facilities for women and social security. Women receive no support from the institutionalized segments of a society, i.e. the governments, unions or community, on the enforcement of existing laws beneficial to them. Employment and industrial legislation geared to the needs of women workers is underdeveloped in relation to foreign investment and to transnational corporations and the role they should be required to play in terms not only of employment but also of training women on a long-term basis for incorporation into the industrialization process. Women workers in the third world have specific problems in the societies in which they live and the ethnic groups to which they belong, and yet they have little or no input into legislative decisions that affect them. Women are generally ignorant of the laws that affect them, how they affect them and the need for changing them. Women therefore need to be counselled on their rights and privileges as well as their responsibilities to the community and the country under the law. Employers and guardians also need to be educated on progressive legislation that would result in the improved status of women in society.

International agencies can provide valuable assistance in legislative change by making recommendations to governments on the basis of their own research and expertise. Proposals for various types of legislation based upon individual country needs could be presented upon request. Seminars and workshops could be arranged to provide vital interaction between policy makers, law makers and women and international experts so that legal, social and economic problems affecting women can be identified and reviewed.



Legislative reform is necessary in order to include provisions for the enforcement of laws through the economic and psychological reward and punishment mechanisms that are brought to bear on individuals, groups or agencies that practice discrimination against women. Whenever possible, laws that conflict with tradition should be incorporated gradually but firmly together with the continuing education and consciousness-raising of the population. Aside from enforcement, those involved in the interpretation of the law and dispensation of justice should be made aware of the problems that face women so that they may alleviate the situation through the medium of court decisions and the setting of precedents, through investigation and research of existing laws, and through recommending the repeal of discriminatory or conflicting laws.

Although legislation alone cannot induce attitudinal changes in a population, it is a first step towards equality for women both socially and economically, and is a necessary condition for increasing their role in the industrialization process.

#### CREDIT AVAILABILITY

One of the main constraints encountered by women in their attempt to develop their own industries and employment as a response to the lack of adequate opportunities in the existing occupational structure is the lack of adequate financing. Rural women, particularly, suffer discrimination in this area. Financing for various enterprises is available in many developing countries but in limited amounts from sources such as money lenders, local commercial banks, agricultural credit, and government. It often calls for the credit worthiness of borrowers, which is appraised in terms of available collateral. Women often cannot provide sufficient collateral for these types of loans due to existing social legislation that keeps property in the name of husbands or fathers, or inheritance laws that discriminate against women. Also, many loans are short-term and new entrepreneurs

often require longer periods to make their investments pay off. Financing therefore should be made available not only in greater amounts but also in more flexible terms including longer repayment periods than have traditionally been required if it is to assist women.

Agro-business projects, particularly, require longer repayment periods and some credit institutions are indicating an increasing awareness of the situation by providing medium-term financing, but the higher security required by them makes these loans unavailable to women. Women therefore are dependent upon sponsors or guarantors who may be governmental agencies, private individuals or groups who will guarantee their venture and cover the risks of failure, thereby encouraging relaxation of stringent credit terms. Short-term loans are impractical because initial start-up losses are not conducive to repayment and require higher cash generation.

Low-cost, effective credit programmes are urgently needed in most developing countries for use by potential women entrepreneurs. Lending to large-scale producers has always been more attractive and less costly than lending to small-scale producers, as most women are. The unit costs of the loans may be the same but the returns are much higher on larger loans than on smaller ones. It is estimated that processing costs connected with administering loans to large producers amount to less than 5 per cent of the loans while the costs that are involved in financing provided by governments, through the medium of co-operatives, to small producers may be over 20 per cent of the loan. In any event, by the time the small entrepreneur receives a loan the interest rates could rise to as high as 30 per cent to cover processing and capital costs, thus making it out of reach for many women. This is a tremendous factor preventing women from undertaking independent business activities and some forms of government subsidy are necessary if small producers are to benefit, at least until they are able to stabilize their business.

In some developing countries, innovative schemes are being developed to favour small producers. Some banks are easing their requirements for small borrowers, basing credit worthiness upon reputation rather than available collateral, yet this is still in favour of men. In some cases, credit is provided to villages as units and the villages become responsible for repaying the loan. In both instances, however, community pressures and attitudes can make or break a woman's efforts, and generally women suffer in favour of men when credit is limited. Banks and financial agencies require reorientation in order to change their attitudes towards loan applicants and establish closer relationships with female clients so as to be able to monitor the uses to which monies are put.

Most governments have no long-term detailed plans and forecasts of activities and budgetary requirements, including subsidies, for agro-business development and small-scale urban industrial development. When plans exist, they are not sufficiently co ordinate with other aspects of the economic development process and the result is a general reduction in effectiveness and continuing waste of human resources.

In order to alleviate this situation, it is necessary first of all for women to become involved in income-generating activities i.e. the production of marketable goods or services that will then be used to repay loans and credit. Women involved in productive enterprises at the small-scale, rural or urban industrial levels are in greatest need of credit. For example, the Experimental Credit to Ujamaa Village in the United Republic of Tanzania aims at the diversification of the village economy whereby women are encouraged to save a portion of their incomes from production activities for reinvestment. In India, there are projects with similar goals where both urban and rural women participate in income-generating activities with the guidance and advice of banks and other governmental or financial institutions. In some West African countries, project proposals have been made to assist existing agricultural credit

institutions to formulate practical projects or programmes that would qualify larger numbers of the rural populations, especially women, for access to institutional credit and savings facilities. These credit institutions need to be encouraged by provision of governmental support in services to make them amenable to providing favourable credit and banking facilities for women. It is believed that viable credit schemes tested in these countries could then be introduced to other countries.

In Botswana, the establishment of small-scale enterprises and employment of women and the poor are factors upon which loan applications are judged with a view to raising incomes and generating employment. The relationship between women and small-scale informal sector entrepreneurship is shown in El Salvador where a revolving line of credit along with technical assistance and training has been established; in the very first year of activity over 80 per cent of the loans were made to women.

A study should be made of the characteristics of female entrepreneurs, their enterprises, need for technical assistance, strengths and weaknesses in order to determine the efficiency of their activities. Based upon this information, credit institutions would be able to reduce their discriminatory practices and increase the availability of credit to women and all small entrepreneurs without requiring unrealistic collaterals or creating unnecessary paper work.

Tied to this whole issue is the fact that legal constraints on women owning property must be removed or relaxed to enable them to borrow. Also, women must be able to keep records and must therefore be literate if they are to be successful in their entrepreneurship and in the acquisition of loans. Finally, women must be mobile, self-reliant and knowledgeable of their endeavours. The links between education and training, entrepreneurship and legislation become increasingly apparent in this area.

International organizations can provide funding for training,

creation of employment, purchase of raw materials and equipment, and repayment of loans for women who endeavour to be independent entrepreneurs. These organizations can also provide technical expertise and advice to women, credit institutions and governments. They can also assist in the training of women credit officers who would be more sympathetic, knowledgeable and sensitive to the needs of women applicants and who could advise them on financing as well as act as co-ordinators by introducing women to experts who could provide technical and economic guidance.

#### UNIONIZATION

The vulnerability of women in the economic and social structure of society is compounded by their lack of organization. Women are either reluctant or unable to actively participate in trade unions and, through them, demand better treatment from employers or improved access to jobs.

In most cases, not only are women ignorant of the benefits of unionization, but unions in developing countries have focused primarily on males. Employers of women workers, such as manufacturers, transnational corporations and governmental agencies, discourage unionization among women to maintain competitive labour markets and increase profits, and the fact that some women undertake piece-work at home in order to take care of family responsibilities as well tends to militate against unionization because of lack of time and opportunity. The high unemployment rates and limited number of jobs have also been partly responsible for male resistance to women's participation in union management and for the general neglect of women's labour-related interests; this has been reinforced by the lack of initiative and persistence on the part of women. Even unions that are geared to the needs and rights of women are usually separate from male unions and generally more active in urban areas than in the rural areas where the greater number

of women actually live and work. The result is a weakness of women workers in terms of bargaining power with employers, thereby exposing them to various forms of exploitation such as low wages, poor working conditions, overwork, poor guidance and supervision, job insecurity, lack of career mobility and general discriminatory practices.

As already pointed out, existing industrial legislation is geared to the needs of male workers, and little protective economic, social or industrial legislation has been developed to cater to the needs of women workers. The lack of organization among women has prevented them from developing into a powerful group that could lobby for the best interests of its wno members, and even provide input for new and necessary industrial legislation pertaining to women. It has also resulted in the deplorable paucity of women in decision-making positions, and to the lack of leaders who could identify the problems of, and issues relative to, women workers, and who could implement changes through the development of appropriate new policies.

The role of unions in developing countries differs form that of unions in developed countries because of differences in economic and social conditions, work histories and life cycles of workers. Unions in developing countries have to be responsible for advocating and pioneering changes in industrial and labour legislation e.g. for organizing women. Thus, the focus on wage increases may be replaced by one on job creation ; sophisticated benefits packages may give way to identification of the basic needs of particular segments of workers e.g. women ; definitions of minimum acceptable limits of productivity may have to be revised given infrastructural and technological deficiencies etc.

Women need to be educated and motivated to join existing unions or to form new ones. Union leaders need to be educated about working women and their problems and needs, which differ, in some cases, from those of men. Husbands and fathers of women need to be educated in terms of the benefits that accrue to women by joining such organizations. Social

legislation in some countries needs to be amended so that women no longer require male authorization to join organizations.

The participation of women in unions would assist in bringing about needed changes in social and industrial legislation, income and wage policies, working conditions and supporting services. Females in union management would provide valuable input into the selection of goals and priorities for women workers and would be influential in recruiting more women as union members.

International agencies could be of assistance by bringing together union leaders from developed and developing countries for the purpose of exchanging information necessary for the development of female-oriented unions in developing countries. By involving women in international trade union conferences, seminars and workshops oriented to the development of leadership skills related to organized labour, women can be successfully incorporated into both union and non-union management levels.

#### EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

If developing countries are to progress they must increase their productive capacity and employment for all segments of the population fast enough to absorb the rapidly increasing labour force. Employment is, perhaps, the main factor determining the role of women in the industrialization process.

The foregoing sections have provided an analysis of the major constraints that hamper the integration of women into this process by denying them access to jobs. It is essential that job opportunities be created in the urban, and more particularly, in the rural areas of developing countries by restructuring the economic framework and the industrial and occupational sectors, and by eliminating or reducing the constraints that prevent women from participating fully in industrial deve-

lopment. Women should be utilized at all levels ; educated women who are under-utilized or not utilized at all must be effectively absorbed into the economic and industrial development process.

The economies of developing countries vary and therefore a single universal blueprint for the incorporation of women into industrial development cannot be created and different methods need to be devised. Nevertheless, whatever the strategy, a change of attitudes is required among women and men, decision makers, implementors and workers. This is possible because attitudes are not inherited, they are learned and are therefore subject to change. To change attitudes means changing the social and cultural environment, which is only possible through education. For example, there is a need to eliminate stereotypes of women workers ; people need to be counselled and taught to develop not only saleable skills but also the mind-set or worldview that the industrialization process requires and this can only take place if the work-world is restructured and the aspirations of economic improvement inculcated into both women and men.

The creation of jobs that are accessible to women is of crucial importance for long-term economic growth and development. This necessitates adequate planning at all levels of the industrialization process within short, medium and long term frameworks with priority given to employment generation. Short-term goals should be identified and distinguished from medium and long-term goals involving types of technologies, remedial legislation to be enacted, industries to be supported, research to be undertaken, interim or permanent economic activities and relevant training etc. The removal or reduction of constraints will provide improved access to jobs but the jobs must also be available, and therefore their creation takes priority in economic development. A number of approaches are identified below to which individual countries and planning agencies can add based upon their own needs and goals.



The concern for women lies with their integration not only into the large-scale urban industrial sectors that are oriented to rapid economic growth and technological development, but also into the small and medium-scale industries in both rural and urban areas, which contribute to long-term economic growth. If the large-scale modern sector does not generate jobs, the small and medium-scale, labour-intensive sectors that utilize appropriate rather than high technologies must be relied upon.

The introduction of new technologies in industry has in many cases had negative implications for women. Automation has been a prime factor in increasing unemployment in some instances and women previously employed in labour-intensive production are often displaced. This is particularly noticeable in the textile and electronics industries of both developed and developing countries, and in agricultural activities such as planting and harvesting in almost all countries. Thus, while technological development is positive in the long run, during transitional stages it adversely affects women because of the failure to create, on a concurrent basis, new alternative sources of employment to absorb displaced workers or new entrants into the labour force. The introduction of new improved technologies requires careful planning within the larger national economic framework; erratic haphazard development tends to reduce the overall economic benefits to be reaped by a nation.

Development of the agricultural sector aims at increasing productivity through the application of advanced technologies. Attention should be given to the types of technology applied, since the adoption of inappropriate technologies causes unemployment in rural areas, which in turn leads to heavy migration to urban areas. A more balanced way of developing rural areas and minimizing social disruption would be to have the choice of appropriate technologies in terms of capital and labour, and the location of small and medium-scale industries in rural areas.

This would prevent unemployment and migration, and improve income distribution.

At policy-making levels, jobs may be increased by supporting labour-intensive, appropriate intermediate technologies in selected instances rather than only capital-intensive high technologies, particularly in the manufacturing area. Even the production should be geared to labour-intensive methods of production at least on a short or medium-term basis, until women have equal options. Once the labour force is better utilized better trained and reduced in volume, the next stage of industrial development becomes possible and further changes can be effected,

The modern industrial sector absorbs only a very small proportion of the total labour force of developing nations ; the percentage of women employed is extremely low. The lack of development of agricultural industries and associated infrastructural needs, e.g. irrigation and transportation in the rural sector, has perpetuated poverty, which remains a major problem in many developing countries. The rural poor, of whom women comprise at least 50 per cent. have remained unused and left out of the mainstream of economic development. Increased productivity and income for this group are dependent upon increased job opportunities for all segments of the adult population in both urban and rural sectors.

Furthermore, women in industry are utilized in only a few industrial sectors. The chief sector that attracts women workers is manufacturing, whether large or small-scale and, particularly, low technology, labour-intensive consumer goods industries. Female labour also predominates in textiles and apparel, electronics, handicrafts and agricultural industries related to forestry, fishing and food-processing. Retail trade provides some scope for women. In some parts of West Africa, for example, women have been traditionally dominant in all aspects of retail trade. Building and construction industries also utilize women in varying capacities. As far as service industries are concerned,

in some countries women have little or no opportunities to enter this sector owing to cultural traditions but in some Asian and Latin American countries the recreational industries and retail sales sectors have absorbed large numbers of women workers in the lower-level white-collar sector.

The industries in which women are employed are either low technology industries requiring low capital investment and having low productivity or high technology industries with high capital investment, but also highly labour-intensive. In both cases, women workers receive marginal remuneration and experience poor and often exploitative working condition. Women are also involved in industry through independent entrepreneurship where they manage and direct manufacturing or service activities, e.g. in Ghana and the Philippines. Self-employment is one of the most promising aspects of employment for women, but as has been indicated above, there are social and economic barriers preventing faster development in this area in many developing countries.

In spite of their subordinate roles in industry, women have contributed substantially to the development, success and growth of traditional lines of small and medium-scale industries that still represent a major part of industrial production in developing countries ; in some cases they have actually been responsible for propelling countries into the world markets.

While not considered industrial workers, female domestic labour contributes indirectly to economic development as the availability of these women enables the more educated women to undertake employment at higher echelons of industry and government by freeing them from domestic responsibilities.

In developing countries as educational levels are raised more women attempt to enter higher-level jobs without the accompanying benefits of labour-saving devices that would free them from their household duties. The poorer unskilled women therefore fill the gap left by undeveloped technology. Opportunities should be provided for these women to upgrade their

skills so as to increase their contribution to the economy, and care should be taken to prevent the institutionalization of this role as a permanent part of the occupational opportunity structure for women.

Rural-urban migration is ubiquitous throughout in the third world, whether temporary or permanent in nature, and whether it is generally female as in Latin America or male as in Africa and Asia, women are disadvantaged in both cases. If females migrate to urban areas they are usually accompanied by their children, if any, and they become sole supporters of their families. They face serious competition from males, who generally have higher skill levels than the women, for already scarce urban industrial jobs. Often, the only opportunities open to these women are petty trading, food preparation, general domestic labour, prostitution etc. or they join the ranks of the destitute, contributing to the chronic problem of urban poverty. In Latin America there are more women in the urban populations than in Africa and Asia, however their proportion in the industrial labour force has now begun to decline. If males migrate, females are left behind to care for families and take over subsistence production from departing males, from which they receive no economic or social benefits and often suffer from the effects of malnutrition, poor health and even famine. This contributes to declining productivity in rural areas.

Urban growth through migration is a serious problem in developing countries leading to massive urban poverty and alienation on the one hand, and the creation of an artificial need to import increasing quantities of staple foods due to neglect of the rural sectors, on the other. Rapid urbanization also affects the age and sex structures of the labour force and determines to some extent whether representation of females in certain sectors of employment improves or not based upon supply of, and demand for, labour in particular occupational areas.

Given this situation, it becomes necessary to identify all the

existing methods, and to devise new ones, of creating jobs, particularly those accessible to women. Among other strategies to create jobs, it may be practical to identify existing industries in urban and rural areas that are conducive to the employment of women and to analyse the common characteristics, economic roles and specific needs of these industries within the national or regional development plan. By upgrading, financing, developing and expanding these industries, more jobs become available for greater numbers of women. The types of raw materials and technologies that would favour women's participation should be studied and then made available and modifications recommended in existing production methods that would be beneficial to women. Industries that are geared to the production of labour-saving devices that assist women to enter the labour force should be identified, encouraged and developed. These industries could not only use women at the production level, but also as advisers and consultants to provide crucial information regarding the specific needs of women in urban and rural sectors.

#### RURAL INDUSTRIALIZATION

In most developing countries, significant proportions of women are still involved in agriculture which remains at a low productive level. Whether the industrialization process as it currently operates can provide adequate employment opportunities for these women is questionable. It appears that the development of the agro-industrial sector and the efficient use of rural labour is a priority as it also becomes a major market for domestic industrial output. From another standpoint, development of the rural sector and the resulting increase of job opportunities can reduce the rate of urbanization thereby creating a more balanced growth in the face of rapid population expansion. This alleviates, to some extent, the problems faced by women in being integrated into the economic development process.

Industrialization of the rural sectors of developing countries, where the largest proportions of populations still reside and where women live in the greatest numbers, will take jobs and services to where the people are, in their communities, thereby increasing non-agricultural employment. Rural industrialization requires careful planning involving the upgrading of existing industries so that not only productivity but also product quality is improved thereby ensuring the marketability of goods produced. In addition, new industries, particularly agro-based, that can absorb women workers effectively should be established with technical assistance from international agencies or other developing countries with similar economic problems and experiences.

A restructuring of the agricultural sector in order to integrate women into the industrial effort is possible by *inter alia* the formation of cooperatives that facilitate and encourage the use of women for economic and industrial development, protect women producers, and assist in teaching and training them and providing them with experience and increased employment and income.

Focus should be on the development and support of small and medium-scale industries that are the main sources for the generation of jobs. Given adequate support, the right product and aggressive entrepreneurship, these industries could become exporters and could generate even more employment for both women and men than large-scale industries. Women in areas that are oriented at present to small-scale industries should be instructed in the use of appropriate technologies and machines relevant to their local economies, such as mills, pumps and carts, and taught to make optimal use of local resources. However, caution should be exercised with regard to automation or mechanization of agro-based industries as the displacement effects for women are worse than for men in most instances.

Women should be involved in any matters concerning improvements in the infrastructure, e.g. the water supply, that

would permit them more free time to develop and utilize opportunities for their own employment, and advancement through education, improved health practices etc.

Rural industrialization need not be responsible for eliminating cottage industries or handicraft production, in which women are traditionally involved, if women develop these areas to produce marketable goods. Rural crafts and manufacturing can be expanded, supported and encouraged as can rural services utilizing female workers such as the establishment of village stores and retail outlets and other social support services.

Rural industrialization planning should therefore take into account the following requirements of women :

- a. Full-time, part time or seasonal employment that would assist women to perform their dual functions of home-makers and workers ;
- b. Jobs within a flexible time-frame ;
- c. Low-capital, labour-intensive investments that utilize all available local skills and locally available raw materials and appropriate technologies ;
- d. Social support facilities and services, e.g. child-care, health-care, training, housing and transportation, that would be instrumental in reducing the rural-urban migration detrimental to women ;
- e. Community development service centres to act as information centres and as co-ordinating agencies to keep women abreast of development projects that provide opportunities for them.

#### **.SELF-EMPLOYMENT**

Projects for self-employment for women are feasible if women can be assured that they will not be exploited and that they will receive managerial and technical advice, credit at reasonable rates of interest, assistance in marketing their goods and, when they employ others, particularly women, that they will receive

housing, transportation and other infrastructural services. Raw materials must be made available to them and they must be responsible for determining their own policies and practices. Also, to reduce the burden of the dual responsibilities of homemaker and entrepreneur, support services must be made available. Self-employment becomes especially attractive and feasible if the products are fed into the operations of larger industrial projects.

#### TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS

The impact of transnational corporations upon the employment of urban women in developing countries has become increasingly controversial during the past decade. Transnationals from developed countries have sought bases in the developing world for their export manufacturing enterprises because of increasing labour costs, capital outlay and cost competition in their own countries compounded by added costs resulting from the tightening of controls related to environmental protection, safety standards etc.

Transnationals are looked upon by the developing countries as a major source for the acquisition of foreign capital, technology, management, employment and access to international markets. Developing countries are therefore offering various types of incentives and regulations for attracting and controlling the investments and operations of the transnational corporations. There is even a tendency to a certain competition between developing countries in providing incentives to attract the transnationals. However, while they are economic producers and job-generators, transnationals may not be committed to the host country's long-term economic development, and therefore they seldom become an integral part of the domestic economy of a developing country. No serious cost-benefit analyses have been undertaken to assess their true role in the economic development process of these countries and very few



studies have been made to determine the positive or negative socio-economic impact on labour of large wholly-owned subsidiaries of developed country corporate giants as opposed to the relatively small or medium-scale manufacturing undertaken by independent businessmen from developed countries or local manufacturers who receive subcontracts from large multinational corporations. It is important to know in which form transnationals should operate in developing countries, and to what extent the exploitation of developing country resources including female labour, should be regulated to maintain the long-term socio-economic objectives of the host country.

A major problem is that little is known by the host developing country of the internal policies and corporate behaviour of transnationals. In certain cases, the combination of foreign investment and unenlightened governmental policies has resulted in the premature introduction of high technology, which has replaced job-generating industries or activities thereby displacing workers.

Because of the importance to them of low production costs, some transnationals tend to utilize unskilled and less skilled labour who are generally not utilized and therefore willing to work for low wages in often unsatisfactory working environments. It is in this context that the generation of jobs for women by transnationals should be regarded. While providing job opportunities for women, transnationals tend to have an adverse effect on women's socio-economic status. In some instances the workers are paid a subsistence wage with little hope of a raise; sometimes institutional pressures are exerted to prevent the organization of unions so as not to discourage foreign investment. The skills taught in most of these industries are not transferable, thus increasing the insecurity of the workers in a situation where employment is highly dependent of fluctuations in the world market.

Part of the issue concerns the attitudes of the Governments of developing countries towards women. Pressures are being

exerted both nationally and internationally by various interested groups to increase the integration of women into the industrialization process ; decision makers and planners may see the employment of women by transnationals as a way to reach this goal. Since women are disadvantaged in these societies anyway, there is less interest on the part of their Governments to exert pressure on transnationals to improve conditions or participate in long-term economic and human resource development plans, especially if the foreign investment is seen as something desirable by the minority elite recipients of benefits.

Transnationals need not be totally exploitative ; they can and should be required to make a commitment to the local economy. Developing countries that provide incentives to transnationals should consider the adverse impact these can have on the labour employed by transnationals, most of which is female. It is imperative that, in return for reduced costs of production, transnationals be required to provide long-term benefits in the form of training, appropriate technology and better working conditions.

#### STRATEGIES

Increasing the number of women in the industrialization process does not mean more women should gain access to positions held by men, but implies a total restructuring of all economic, social, educational and legal structures whereby both women and men are equally able to participate in the total economic development process that provides increasing opportunities for all.

To include women in the industrial labour force it would be necessary, at the planning level, to introduce both labour-intensive and capital-intensive patterns of economic growth resulting in a more balanced distribution of income; to increase purchasing power resulting in increased consumption ; to introduce and use appropriate technologies wherever possible; to develop concurrently the rural and urban sectors to reduce

imbalances of development; to expand the public services sector in health, education and welfare ; to increase productivity ; and to focus on women as a major disadvantaged group.

Governments should undertake research with the assistance of international agencies to create a data base to determine the existing and projected proportions of women in the labour force, the best types of technology to be acquired or developed, the types of job to be created, the types of product to be produced and the types of market to be sought so that employment for women can be increased. This data should be incorporated into all national development plans and co-ordinated with actual training programmes.

Governments should also study trends and policies related to women, undertake national surveys on the status of women in the basic sectors of the economy, develop inventories of female skills and resources, study the possibilities for increasing female employment and devise methods for improving working conditions. National policies on employment should undertake research to devise labour-saving technology and develop supporting social structures and services to release working women from time-consuming household duties and provide more leisure in which they can recuperate from their dual tasks of homemaker and worker. Research activities should be co-ordinated between various public and private sectors and between national and international bodies to identify new areas of industry where the involvement of women will be possible.

Another important area that needs to be dealt with by Governments is health and fertility control. Women with large families tend to refrain from working, while women who work tend to have smaller families ; this is an important factor for the economic improvement of women's status and women and men need to be educated on the economic, social, psychological and physical benefits of smaller families. While population control is a sensitive issue, the mass media, and women's organizations particularly, can be used to promote this concept

in relation to the issue of employment and economic progress. Progressive, influential women can act as opinion leaders within various communities to provide much needed information.

The mass media is essential to propagate progressive measures that will benefit both women and men in the long run. It is useful in educating women on their rights and privileges, forms of discrimination and how to overcome them, available opportunities in work and education, and so forth. The mass media can be used at a local level for the exchange of ideas and dissemination of useful information.

International agencies can assist the entire process by establishing committees that would interact with national committees that have been set up for the specific purpose of dealing with questions relating to women. They could exchange information, ideas, and co-ordinate research for the purpose of developing policies geared to the needs of individual country. These agencies already possess the bases for the creation of department that would focus on the development and promotion of industries that would absorb women workers. Such departments could act as data sources, and as advisers to countries where the process of industrial development is in its initial stages. Finally, international agencies should employ greater numbers of women within their own staffs as senior levels to provide valuable input and assist in directing policies relating to women in economic development.

Together, governments, regional agencies and international bodies should be able to devise innovations for the increased role of women in industrialization once the traditional barriers to this have been removed.

**PART 3**  
**RELEVANT MATERIALS**  
**STUDY**



# **THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN INDUSTRIALIZATION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

## **SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS**

The meeting noted that, depending upon the level of industrial development and cultural characteristics, women were already participating, mostly at subordinate levels, in industrial production, especially in certain sectors and types of industry. It was agreed that a fundamental change was needed in the nature and structure of such participation.

The meeting noted that a significant number of women were already engaged in industry in the developing countries. However, on a country-to-country basis, the participation of women in the industrial labour force in developing countries was only a very small percentage of the total.

Different country studies presented at the meeting indicated a number of major production lines that more commonly involved women such as food processing, textiles, animal products, household equipment manufacturing, plastic materials, pharmaceutical and medical products, paper and cardboard, electronics, building materials and standardized handicrafts. However, for the most part, women's participation in industrial production was confined to (a) industries with low technology, low capital requirements and low productivity ; or (b) industries that, in spite of high capital requirements and

sophisticated technologies, were highly labour-intensive. The common factors for women workers in these two types of industries are low wages and poor working conditions.

Women's industrial involvement may take various forms ranging from participation in large industrial firms to cottage industry. However, it was considered by the meeting that special efforts were needed to avoid stereotyping or limiting the type of work women should be engaged in, thereby ensuring that all jobs related to industrial production were accessible to women.

The meeting recognized that in many developing countries women had substantially contributed to the development of traditional small and medium-scale industries that still accounted for major industrial production and that, in some cases, had provided for the countries' entry to the world market.

It was noted, however, that, in the current situation, regardless of the sector and type of industry, women mostly participated in the production process at the lowest level of skill requirements and consequently obtained marginal remuneration.

It was also recognized that the pattern of industrial growth in developing countries had tended to favour only a small part of the population, often those living in urban rather than rural areas, which called for increased efforts to develop industry in rural areas on a greater scale. For that to be achieved, there was a need for women in the rural areas to participate in the industrialization process.

A number of constraints to a fuller participation of women in the industrialization process of developing countries was noted by the meeting. Those were mainly of an economic, political, social, legal and psychological nature. The meeting considered the following specific constraints of primary importance :

*Social, attitudinal and institutional barriers :* Centuries' old traditions and the resistance of conservative circles had retarded the emancipation of women and their full and equal participa-



tion with men in economic development. The legacy of colonial structures had also played a major role in the exploitation of women. Social and attitudinal barriers were reflected in such discriminatory practices as unequally remunerative wages, reluctance to employ women at higher echelons of industry, and lack of facilities for assisting women to set up their own enterprises. In certain countries, social and attitudinal aspects of discrimination towards women had been legally institutionalized, for instance, in legislation that requires male authorization for women, below a certain age or married, to participate in organized labour, engage in business, obtain credit or benefit from tax incentives.

*Insufficient employment opportunities for women:* The meeting observed that the existing division of the labour market along sex lines was a cause of prohibiting women's entrance to new lines of production and to their promotion to higher levels of employment. It had been demonstrated that during national emergencies and independence movements women had been mobilized to assume important roles at all levels; however, owing to the non-existence of institutional mechanisms, those efforts were not subsequently channelled into development. On the other hand, at times of acute unemployment and underemployment, the promotion of women's employment was considered as depriving men of their right to work, and women found it particularly hard to find work in industry. It was thus obvious that general unemployment and underemployment were two of the main reasons for the low percentage of women in developing countries.

The meeting noted the inadequate industrial capacity of developing countries as a major constraint to creating increased employment opportunities.

Moreover, the meeting was of the opinion that no special consideration was being given in the developing countries to the promotion and development of industrial projects that women could initiate. Lack of effort in that regard was most

apparent in small-scale industry and in the rural regions where, it was felt, women had the potential to play a significant role in industrial development. Before that could happen, however, special measures were needed to remove a number of constraints such as : (a) lack of information on investment opportunities ; (b) lack of available finance—rural women in particular do not appear to be considered credit-worthy ; (c) lack of enterpreneurial, managerial and technical skills, particularly among rural women ; (d) lack of sufficient training and skill improvement facilities, particularly those leading to overall entrepreneurship development such as marketing, credit and production management ; and (e) lack of information for women on existing facilities and programmes related to industrial development.

*Education and training :* It was stated that a high illiteracy rate was one of the major obstacles preventing women from participating in active production and public life. In certain developing countries, and particularly in rural areas, female illiteracy exceeded 90 per cent.

Furthermore, concerning industrial production, few women had the minimum technical skills required in industry, particularly those required by modern and advanced technologies. That problem was compounded by the fact that there appeared to be discrimination against women when it came to replacement in existing industrial training programmes including on-the-job training. In fact, technological advancements in industry were often used as a pretext for excluding women from high-paying positions in industry, while little was done to upgrade women's skills to correspond to such technological changes.

A further constraint noted by the meeting, both for the integration of women in industry and for general industrial development in developing countries, was that a number of women who were adequately trained to undertake industrial activities were being left idle, or were performing tasks at lower

levels than their qualifications warranted—such inadequate utilization of qualified women should be avoided if maximum human resources were to be mobilized to implement the industrialization targets set by the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action.

*Employment conditons and environment:* Women were often relegated to low-productivity jobs requiring low skills which therefore had lower salaries. Furthermore, even when occupying higher ranks, women's salaries were considered as complementary income, and thus put at a lower level than men's. That fact had led to an inequitable distribution within the economy in favour of men.

Women's effective contribution to the industrialization process was further limited by the fact that whenever women entered the industrial labour force they remained responsible for the household and the care of the family group. The lack, or the ineffectiveness, of legislation for social facilities, maternity and social security benefits was underlined by the meeting. Likewise, the inadequate administrative regulations on working hours, organization of shifts and lack of health and safety regulations and facilities for women hampered their involvement in industry.

It was further noted by the meeting that women's possibility of advancement, particularly in large-scale industries, was impeded by the lack of on-the-job training programmes to upgrade skills.

It was also observed that under the present international economic system, most transnational corporations located industries in developing countries in order to exploit cheap and relatively unorganized labour. Some enterprises particularly sought female labour because it was the most easily exploited industries such as electronics, textiles, food processing industries. Some transnational corporations were, in effect, often exporting a part of the production process that was labour-intensive to the developing countries, in which adverse

employment conditions for women were created, while maintaining capital-intensive, highly-skilled and more productive stages of the labour process in the industrialized countries, thereby inhibiting the transfer of technology to the developing countries.

Another aspect of the existing inequitable international economic system that was pointed out was that many industrialized countries import cheap migrant labour to do work in areas of industry that workers in the developed countries were unwilling to accept. That sometimes involved migrant women workers, but where it involved men, women were also adversely affected because families were split up and women were left with a heavy burden of responsibility for the maintenance of the family, without opportunities to acquire jobs and skills in the domestic economy.

*Lack of participation in decision-making and planning bodies :* Women's interests were usually excluded from the decision-making and planning bodies involved in the industrialization process, with the result that project ideas developed by women for their own benefit often never reached the decision level, and that industrialization plans with adverse effects on women might easily be approved and implemented. The meeting was of the opinion that there was a lack of women's involvement at all decision-making levels of formulation of industrialization strategies and plans, as well as development and execution of specific industrial development projects. It was felt that until a significant degree of involvement of women in decision-making could be secured, discrimination against women in industry would continue. To bring that about, special measures should be called for, as below.

*National level :* Women should be associated with the decisions at all stages of formulation, planning and implementation of industries, including designing, planning of pre-investment and operations at all levels :

- a. Executive, including public service ;
- b. Judicial, including industrial tribunals and quasi-judicial bodies ;
- c. Legislative ;
- d. Industrial boards and boards of directors of state-owned enterprises.

*Local level :* Women should be encouraged to participate in local councils and appropriate municipal boards.

*Enterprise level :* Women should be encouraged to participate in planning, decision-making and management in industrial enterprises, chambers of commerce and industry, professional bodies and unions. Where there are no unions, women should participate in unionization.

*Lack of organization and participation of women in trade unions :* The lack of proper organization among women is one of the major weaknesses in promoting the integration of women in development in general and in industrial development in particular. In the latter case, the meeting noted the lack of organization and effective participation of women in trade unions at the level of members and administrators as well as lack of participation in international organizations involving labour. Where women had attempted to start small industrial units, they had run into constraints that might have been avoided had they been organized into economically and legally viable groups such as industrial co-operatives.

*Information :* Women are not properly informed of the opportunities available concerning their potential involvement in the industrialization process or of the possibilities of improving their skill capabilities to meet the needs of industry.

*Data and methodology on women's contributions :* Data and proper methodology for measuring women's existing and potential contributions to industrialization were crucial to effec-

tive planning of industrialization programmes aimed at fully utilizing available human resources in developing countries. In most developing countries, however, the research required to develop such data and methodology was still to be undertaken.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### *At the national and local levels*

1. Developing countries should create or strengthen national commissions or any other appropriate machinery at the planning, institutional and operational levels to generally promote and co-ordinate the integration of women into the industrialization process, and specifically to ensure the implementation of the recommendations of this meeting.

2. National legislation should be reviewed with a view to abolishing all forms of discrimination, and promoting equality of opportunity and treatment, for men and women.

3. Developing countries should ensure the effective implementation of conventions and recommendations approved in international forums, particularly ILO, to prevent discrimination against women in employment.

4. Governments of developing countries should adopt policies and introduce incentives to eliminate discrimination against women in recruitment practices, career development, on-the-job training and job security, and also against employed women, especially when they need maternity leave.

5. Governments should organize media campaigns at the national and local levels to break down prejudice against women and disseminate information on women's potential in industrialization. Campaigns should also be organized to encourage men to share equally the responsibilities of the household and family, thereby providing women with sufficient time to be actively engaged in industry.

6. In the identification of national priority industries—

small, medium and large-scale — Governments should examine their present criteria to select projects that will encourage women's employment, both in rural and urban sectors, taking into account technology, product design and marketing organization. Industries oriented to household labour-saving devices and infrastructure projects that would increase women's free time and facilitate their entry into the job market should be given high priority.

7. When considering foreign investment requests, Governments should examine the existing policies of foreign enterprises, i.e. transnational corporations, that affect women workers, particularly in large-scale industries, to rectify any discriminatory practices.

8. Measures should be taken at all levels to ensure effective participation of women in all decision-making/planning bodies and in unions.

9. Governments should adopt policy measures to improve the working and living conditions of women workers, including those dealing with out-work and piece-work, and to ensure equal remuneration for work of equal value (including wage supplements for jobs of low satisfaction), equal access to industrial occupations and improved working facilities such as children's day-care centres and rest areas.

10. Banking regulations and policies concerning industrial credit should be reviewed with the objective of modifying them to facilitate the financing of women's industrial projects.

11. Governments should adopt measures to ensure equal access by women to all forms and levels of education and training, and in particular :

a. To review basic educational systems to ensure, among other things, that :

i. An educational system is introduced that aims at combining educational with job opportunities ;

ii. Technical education, including that directed towards industrial employment, is offered ;

iii. Technical education is offered to girls ;

iv. Educational materials are prepared to change the attitudes towards traditional sex roles ;

v. Career guidance is provided based on information on available educational offers and job opportunities ;

vi Reorientation courses are arranged for teachers to ensure implementation of the above reforms ;

b. To provide extramural education, duly co-ordinated with the private sector, for the formation and upgrading of skills including scientific, technical, administrative and managerial ones. The timing of the programmes should be suitable for working women ;

c. To increase women's participation in training programmes. For this purpose, studies should be conducted on the desirability of legislation requiring enterprises and government training institutions to allocate a percentage of their training resources for women.

12. Governments should give priority to developing industrial projects in the rural areas to benefit the poorer sections of the population. In the formulation and execution of these projects, attention should be given to the possibilities of employing women.

13. Governments should create or strengthen special assistance units for women industrialists and entrepreneurs, particularly in small-and medium-scale industries. Such units would assist women in the selection of technology appropriate to local conditions and in the preparation of projects for loan applications. The units should undertake continuing studies of measures designed to improve productivity and working conditions.

14. Governments and responsible non-governmental organizations should promote the organization of women into co-operatives and other industrially registered organizations to enable them to undertake viable industrial projects, particularly in small-and medium-scale industries.

15. For proper industrial planning, data should be extrac-



ted on the actual contribution of women in the production process (including work done at home).

#### AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

The recommendations were made that UNIDO should :

1. Create institutional machinery, such as an interdivisional working group on women in industry, to implement and follow up the relevant recommendations and resolutions adopted in various forums of the United Nations system related to the integration of women in development as well as the recommendations below.

2. Make concrete efforts to have women included in international conferences, workshops and training programmes organized by UNIDO. In particular, special efforts should be made to have workers at the grass-roots level represented at meetings on industrialization.

3. Develop project concepts and proposals for the involvement of women in industry and provide assistance in implementing these programmes when so requested by Governments.

4. Undertake studies related to selected industries, such as electronics, food processing and pharmaceutical and textile industries, and their impact on women, taking into account reports on these subjects by other agencies such as FAO, ILO and WHO. Any preliminary results of such studies should be included in the documentation for the Third General Conference of UNIDO in 1980 and submitted to the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women in 1980.

5. Take into account factors that are likely to adversely affect women in the production process when technical assistance is provided to project feasibility studies or when technologies are selected.

6. Undertake intensive research on the type of technologies that aid women in existing jobs.

7. Undertake studies on the experience of women already

active in small-and medium-scale industries both in rural and urban areas for subsequent dissemination to all developing countries.

8. Take into consideration the possible impact of industrial redeployment on women in the consolidated report that the secretariat is preparing on the subject for submission to the Third General Conference of UNIDO.

9. Formulate, at the request of Governments, pilot projects in areas of rural industrialization where women can be employed, such as agricultural modernization, raw material and agricultural processing, and construction materials. Special funds for this purpose might be allocated from the UNIDO Industrial Development Fund.

10. Improve data collection and research methodology for better industrial planning by extracting data on the actual contribution of women in the production process (including taking measures to quantify goods produced and consumed in the household).

11. Take special measures to increase the participation of women in the training programmes of UNIDO, in particular :

a. To reorient the UNIDO training and fellowship programmes at the managerial and technical levels to ensure a greater participation of women. In reorienting the training programmes, UNIDO should emphasize developing training programmes for women trainers, and strengthening existing national centres or institutions for that purpose. In carrying out this task, UNIDO should consult with other United Nations agencies that are involved in vocational training and education, such as ILO and UNESCO ;

b. To organize special subregional training programmes for women, particularly in industries already planned for the subregion ;

c. To organize meeting of experts to exchange concerning training of women, especially for existing industries with a good potential for participation of women ;

d. To revise the suggestions of UNIDO to Governments for the nomination of female candidates for UNIDO training and fellowship programmes ;

e. To design managerial and training programmes in order for women to keep up to date with the latest technological developments in industry ;

f. To allocate resources from the UNIDO budget for technical co-operation among developing countries to give women the opportunity to upgrade their technical skills through personnel exchange programmes ;

g. As a follow up to resolution 44 (IX) on the integration of women in development adopted by the Industrial Development Board in 1975 and the recommendations of that meeting, the Board may wish to consider (a) requesting the secretariat of UNIDO to design and execute projects for training of women at higher technological and managerial levels ; and (b) allocating a portion of the funds available for training under the Regular Programme of Technical Assistance and allocating other funds specifically for this purpose.

12. Include qualified women at the managerial, administrative and technical levels both in the secretariat and in projects at the country level.

13. Take into consideration in the work programme of UNIDO the ideas expressed in the discussions and documentation of this meeting.

14. Submit the report of this meeting to the Industrial Development Board at its next session and use it as a UNIDO input to the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development under the relevant agenda item.

The following recommendation were made to UNIDO in co-operation with other United Nations agencies :

1. Appropriate United Nations agencies and organizations should include women's interests in the codes of conduct currently under negotiation relating to transfer of technology and transnational corporations.

2. In the light of the decentralized nature of UNDP operations, UNIDO and other United Nations organizations responsible for the promotion of women's participation in industrial development should provide appropriate instructions and guidelines to their field staff and to the UNDP resident representatives. Such guidelines should also be available to government officials and interested non-governmental organizations in the relevant working languages.

3. Women workers should be properly represented at any future meetings organized by the United Nations on the subject of participation of women in development. The United Nations should encourage Governments to invite women workers from both rural and urban areas to participate actively in the policy-making decisions at all meetings related to industrialization, technology transfer, technical training and programme evaluations, so that the actual needs of women can be taken into consideration with first-hand knowledge.

4. UNESCO, ILO and UNIDO should provide assistance to Governments in connection with educational reforms to improve women's technological and scientific skills.

5. An interagency task force on technical co-operation between developing countries in industrial development should be established under the leadership of UNIDO to deal particularly with the transfer of technology and entrepreneurship development programmes for women.

6. All interagency reports prepared by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination of the United Nations concerning women in development should include the topic of women in industry. The topic should also be covered in the regional reports to be prepared for the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, which are provided for in paragraph 9 of the Economic and Social Council resolution 1978/32/Rev. 1.

# **WOMEN IN THE REDEPLOYMENT OF MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The redeployment of manufacturing industry from the developed to developing countries locates in developing countries *inter alia* plants manufacturing for export to the home markets of the developed countries. Such relocation may be carried out directly by transnational corporations. They establish wholly-owned subsidiaries engaged in direct production in developing countries for export back to the home markets of the parent companies. Or, transnationals may subcontract or licence to indigenous enterprises in developing countries the production of manufactured items for further processing or final sale in the developed countries. Finally, independent domestic manufacturing enterprises in developing countries may penetrate developed country markets through contracts with transnational buyer corporations such as large department and chain stores. In all these cases, actual or potential productive capacity is relocated from manufacturing plants in the developed countries and established in the developing countries.

Redeployment of industrial capacity from developed to developing countries can be motivated by the need to keep or secure access to the markets of the developing countries. But the salient characteristic of most foreign dominated industries in developing countries which are labour-intensive,

that is, have a high ratio of labour costs to total costs of production, is that they are motivated chiefly by the search for abundant low-wage labour, in order to reduce costs and prices in competitive final markets. Labour-intensive industries in some developed countries have in the past relied on internal relocation in search of cheaper domestic labour, and more recently immigration of foreign labour. Relocation to developing countries is simply another way a transnational corporation can remain competitive in that specific production activity.

Beginning in the 1960's, industrial redeployment to developing countries has been accelerated by the policies of host governments eager to encourage foreign investment in export-oriented industrialization. This path of industrial development seems to offer many advantages to the host developing country. Since manufacture for export is subject to world competitive pressures, it is likely to be technically efficient. In addition, because of the orientation to a large and growing world market, there is substantial potential for growth, which contrasts with the small, domestic markets which have already stalled the development of import-substituting industries. Because the comparative advantage of developing countries dictates that most export-oriented industries are labour-intensive, the creation of large numbers of unskilled as well as skilled jobs offers a likely solution to the growing problem of high and rising unemployment. Export-oriented industries are also expected to make a welcome contribution to host countries' foreign exchange earnings, and to transfer much-needed skills and technology. To attract such industries, developing nations throughout the world have offered investors an array of investment incentives—tariff exemptions, prolonged tax holidays, favourable labour regulations, and subsidized industrial estates, especially the Free Trade or Export Processing Zones.

Thus the need of industry in the developed countries for industries which would create mass employment, have both

been met by this form of redeployment of industry to developing countries. From both points of view, labour is the crucial factor in industrial redeployment.

One of the most striking facts in labour-intensive industry branches which are under strong competitive pressures on the international markets is the large employment of women, both in developed and developing countries. Indeed, female-intensity of employment in an industry in the developed countries usually is a strong predictor of this industry's propensity to redeployment. In the U.S.A. for example, women form over 90% of all production workers and operators in the two industries which have been most heavily redeployed to developing countries—electronics assembly and wearing apparel.

This female-intensive pattern of employment is also found in the developing countries in redeployed, export-oriented industries. In the majority of Free Trade Zones, well over 70% of the total employed are women. In Mexico, 85% of the workers in the maquiladoras or "twin-plants" along the U.S.A. border are women. In the Republic of Korea, women account for 75% of all workers in export industries including workers in an export processing zone. In the three other Asian Export Processing Zones (Kaohsiung, Nantze and Taichung) 80% of the workers are women. In the Free Trade Zone (Bayan Lepas) in Malaysia, 85% of all workers are women, and in the Export Processing Zone of Mauritius, more than 80% of workers are women. These figures are repeated for nearly all such industrial export zones in the developing world.

Female intensive employment is found in both transnational subsidiaries and indigenous firms producing for export from developing countries. In those countries where export-oriented industries are well established, manufacturing has emerged as the major source of employment for women—in Singapore 40% of all economically active women are found in the manufacturing sector, and this proportion rises to 60% in Hong Kong. At the same time, in these two countries and also in the

Republic of Korea and Malaysia, the proportion of the total manufacturing labour force which is female ranges from just under to well over half, whereas in the developed countries this proportion hovers around one third. In other words, as a consequence of export-oriented industrialization programs at a particular stage of economic development, relatively more women than men may be employed in manufacturing in some developing countries, compared to the developed countries.

Looking at the employment figures by industry yields the same result. In the electronics industry, where it is estimated that close to half a million workers are employed in developing countries by American firms alone, over 90% of all production workers, and nearly 100% of all assemblers, are women. Women account for 85% of all textile workers in the Republic of Korea and 90% of all toy industry workers in the Republic of Korea and the Philippines.

The predominance of female employment in foreign-initiated, export-oriented industries raises several issues of utmost importance in the evaluation of the contribution of such industries and of redeployment of industries in general to economic development in the host countries. First, to the extent that these industries simply draw into the labour force a group of workers who were not previously economically active, it does little to reduce the unemployment rate of prime-age males who are considered to form the bulk of the unemployed—the major problem which host governments have expected industrialization to solve. Second, to the extent that the type of employment of women differs from that of men, it may affect the benefits which the host country may expect to derive from such industries. For example, female employment in both developed and developing countries tends so far to be concentrated in low-wage, low skill “dead-end” jobs promising little upgrading of skills and incomes for the individual worker or for her country. To the extent that foreign exchange earnings from export manufacturing are dependant on the level of the wage incomes of workers employed, these are



reduced since women generally receive lower wages than men. Employers may be reluctant to invest in training and skill acquisition for workers if they perceive that these workers as women are unlikely to be committed to the labour force in the long run. On the other hand, the fact that it is women rather than men who are employed by export-oriented factories may be seen as beneficial to the host country because it increases its supply of productive resources through the increased labour force participation of women—an important factor for those few countries which are experiencing labour shortages, such as Singapore. A further concern is what happens when the available supply of young women willing to work is exhausted by the very success of labour intensive export manufacturing. The evidence so far indicates that rather than turn to available supplies of unemployed male labour, the export industry in these specific branches may relocate altogether to other developing countries where female labour is readily available.

Aside from their economic contribution, the mass employment of women in industry suggests that developing countries may be facing major social and cultural changes in their indigenous societies, no less than are the developed countries where women's labour force participation has increased dramatically in recent years. The likely effects of employment and consumption patterns, on demographic behaviour such as migration, marriage and childbearing, on family relationships and the division of labour between the sexes, all have potential consequences for economic development, as well as being of intrinsic importance. A most important question to be answered is to what extent the relocation of labour-intensive industries to developing countries for export purposes could be a form of development which benefits women and improves their position in society and the economy.

This paper will attempt a review analysis of the information currently available on women in export manufacturing industries set up in developing countries and/or managed by foreign com-

panies. We will first examine the characteristics of female employment in export industries (chapter II), and next, the reasons why women are so heavily employed by these industries (chapter III). Then we will consider the impact of employment on the women workers themselves (chapter IV), and the implications of mass female employment for the host society and economy as a whole (chapter V). Finally, we will summarize our findings and analysis, and consider the various policy questions and options posed by the phenomenon of mass female employment in redeployed industries (chapter VI).

It will be noted that nearly all the information to be presented and analyzed in this paper relates to female employment in export-oriented industries in only a few developing countries—Mexico, and the Asian countries of the Republic of Korea, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore. These are the countries in which these type of industries have been longest established, sufficient to generate significant research results. Although there are numerous other countries where industrial redeployment for export purposes has occurred, women workers in these few countries probably account for the vast majority of all women workers in such industries in developing countries, and their experience may thus be considered to be quite representative.

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF FEMALE EMPLOYMENT IN REDEPLOYED INDUSTRIES

*Industrial Concentration* : Industrial relocation to developing countries for export purposes has so far been highly concentrated in relatively few industries, the two most prominent being textiles and garments, and electronic products. While the garments industry employs a relatively low technology and is labour-intensive because it is difficult to mechanize, the electronics industry—producing both intermediate components like semi conductors and final consumer goods like radio and tele-

vision receivers, cassette tape and record players, hand-held calculators, watches, clocks and electronic games—combines high technology with unskilled labour-intensive processes in certain stages of production, such as assembly. About 300000 workers, nearly half the total labour force in Asian Export Processing Zones, are employed in electronics factories. In 1975, 74% of the employees in the export-oriented factories in Hong Kong, Tunisia, El Salvador and Mexico, worked in textiles and garments manufacturing (26%) or in the electronics industry (48%). More recent data for Mexico indicates that 60% of the “maquiladoras”—industries in the Border Industrialization Program are in electronic and electrical assembly, while 30% are in textiles and garments. A similar dominance of these two industries is found in other countries. Electronics is relatively more prominent in Malaysia and Singapore, where it employs nearly 50,000 women in each country, while textiles and garments are relatively more prominent in the Republic of Korea and the Philippines.

It is noteworthy that these two industries dominate both in countries where manufacturing for export has been long established (Hong Kong, Mexico, Singapore), and in countries where it is a relatively recent phenomenon (Tunisia, Philippines, Thailand). Other industries in which labour-intensive manufacturing for export is carried out in developing countries include leather, footwear, toys, sports goods, plastic articles, miscellaneous light consumer products, and assembly of scientific and medical instruments and of optical and photographic equipment. The degree of industrial concentration of female employment is shown by the following examples. In Singapore, 83% of the women who entered the manufacturing-labour force between 1969 and 1973 were in just four industries: textiles, clothing, electronics and footwear. In Hong Kong, most of the young women workers are found in these four industries: textiles, clothing, electronics and plastics. In the Philippines in 1975, virtually all the firms in the Export Pro-

cessing Zones were involved in textiles, garments and footwear manufacture ; beginning in 1976, transnational electronics companies also moved into the Zones.

In addition to being relatively concentrated by industry, industrial redeployment for export purposes is also heavily concentrated by country, though it is being carried out in a large number of developing countries. The dominant countries are those which were first in the field such as Hong Kong, The Republic of Korea, Singapore and Mexico. While transnational corporation subsidiaries dominate in electronics assembly, the textile and garments industry, especially in the Asian countries, has a large number of small and large indigenous firms subcontracting to foreign markets. The indigenous textiles and garments industry also tends to be less overwhelmingly export-oriented than the electronics assembly industry. Among transnational subsidiaries, firms of the U.S.A. dominate in electronics while the Japanese dominate in textiles and garments. In all cases, the major export market is the U.S.A., followed by Western Europe and Japan.

*Age and Marital Status* : Export industries in developing countries have—at least so far—had an overwhelming preference for employing young women, as the following figures indicate. About one-third of the total industrial labour force in the Republic of Korea consists of young women aged between 16 and 25, and the average age of textile workers is 19 ; 80% of textile industry workers are women aged between 14 and 24 years ; 90% of toy industry workers are women, almost all of them under the age of 22.

Of 67,000 direct labour employees in various Export Processing Zones in other Asia in mid-1977, women constituted 85%, with the following age breakdown : 14-15 years, 6.1% ; 16-19 years, 40.4% ; 20-24 years, 31.1% ; 25-29 years, 12.1% ; 30-39 years, 6.7% ; 40 years and over, 3.6%. 77.6% of the women were under 25 years of age, and 90% under 30.

In Malaysia, 85% of the workers in the Bayan Lepas Free Trade Zone are aged between 18 and 24, with many factories having nearly 100% of their workers between the ages of 16 and 25. One sample survey of electronics workers in the Sungei Way-Subang Free Trade Zone found 93% of them to be between 16 and 25 years. In Singapore, 71% of economically active females were below the age of 30 in 1975. In Mexico, 85% of the workers in the maquiladoras along the border of the U.S.A. are women aged between 17 and 23. A similar age structure of the female labour force in export manufacturing has been reported in Hong Kong, where many workers enter the labour force between the ages of 12 and 14, and in the Philippines. In most countries, the lower wage limit is set by law e.g. 17 in Mexico, 16 in Malaysia and Singapore, but in various other countries, any legal limits seem not be observed.

The upper age limit seems to be largely determined by the mean age of marriage of factory women, which is some what higher than that for other women in their societies. In Mexico, 70% of the maquiladora workers are single. In the Masan Zone of the Republic of Korea, 78% of the women workers are unmarried. In one survey of electronics workers in Malaysia, 86% of them were unmarried. In Hong Kong and the Philippines, a large majority of workers in export industries, and especially in the Zones, are unmarried. In general, it is estimated that up to 85% of the labour force in the Asian Zones is under 30 years of age, unmarried or married without children.

*Education and Work Experience* : The average educational attainment of women workers in export industries seems to be a middle school or junior high school, or middle secondary school level, varying by country and industry. In the Philippines, a high school diploma is almost a necessary qualification for a factory job in the Export Processing Zones. More than two-thirds of the workers in one survey had a high school or better

education : 45.6% had completed high school and another 22% had gone to or even graduated from college. In the Republic of Korea, many of those who work in foreign firms are high school graduates. In the electronics industry in Malaysia, workers usually have at least nine years of formal education ; 75% in one survey had more than a middle school education, and many have completed secondary school. In Singapore, a primary school education, (six years) is a minimum requirement for work in electronics factories, but workers with some secondary education are preferred. In Mexico, maquiladoras workers have completed at least six years of school—a level of educational attainment higher than the average for Mexican workers as a whole of 3.8 years. Many of the women have also attended commercial schools, and have studied to be nurses, book-keepers, typists, secretaries, computer technicians and beauticians.

Generally speaking, the electronics industry has higher educational requirements than the textiles and garments industry in all countries. While workers in electronics plants must have completed primary school, and preferably some secondary school as well, workers in textiles and garments may have a less than complete primary school education—this is the case in Mexico and also in Singapore and Malaysia. Foreign firms also require higher educational qualifications of their workers than do indigenous firms. In the Republic of Korea, for example, transnational corporations are considered to have raised the educational standard required of a factory worker above that required by domestic firms. In Malaysia and Singapore, indigenous firms tend to have lower educational requirements of workers than transnational corporations—most commonly they require only a primary school education whereas foreign firms require some secondary school education as well.

The young age of most factory women precludes much prior work experience, though this varies from country to

country. In most countries, the workers are usually fresh school-leavers in their first job—this seems to be true in all the Asian countries. Where some workers have previously been engaged in paid employment, this is most likely to have been in “informal sector” jobs such as domestic service and seamstressing. Many have also been previously engaged in family labour—in farming in countries like Malaysia, and in piece-work for putting-out industries in Hong Kong.

Two-thirds of the women workers in the Bayan Lepas Free Trade Zone in Malaysia in 1973 were new entrants to the wage labour force; in 1975, less than 20% of the workers in the same zone had been previously employed, mostly in farming, domestic service, seamstressing and sales. One recent survey in Mexico found that whereas electronics factory workers had a median age of 21 years and 60% of them were in their first job, workers in the apparel industry had a median age of 26 years and only 30% of them were in their first job. Of those who had previously worked, 40% had worked in the services sector as clerks, cashiers, salespersons, beauticians and so on, while the next largest group had worked as domestics in Mexico or the U.S.A., in the latter case almost all as undocumented aliens.

It is interesting to make a comparison here with the pattern of employment in these same industries in the developed countries. In the U.S.A. in 1975, for example, women formed over 90% of all production workers and operators in the two industries which have been most heavily redeployed to developing countries—electronics assembly and apparel. The apparel industry alone employs one out of every five women in the manufacturing sector in the U.S.A. Women also account for an almost equally high proportion of workers in the footwear, toy and plastic goods industries which are being redeployed overseas. A typical electronics firm in the U.S.A. requires only that applicants for jobs be 18 years old. No high school diploma, skills or previous job experience are

required. In contrast to the high proportion of unmarried women in export manufacturing industries in developing countries, only 17% of women working in manufacturing industries in the U.S.A., and only 43% of women factory workers in Japan, are unmarried.

*Structure of Employment* : In the developing as in the developed countries, women workers are overwhelmingly (more than 90%) employed in direct labour in the observed industries, as production workers and operators. In the garments industry, women work as tailors, stitchers, sewing machine operators, clothes pressers, and assistants—jobs requiring a relatively low level of skill and offering no opportunities for advancement. There are few skilled jobs e.g. fashion designing, available in the industry and virtually no internal job ladder exists. The same is true of other industries like footwear and toy assembly.

Employment in the electronics industry has a more complex and hierarchical structure, but women are concentrated in the lowest assembly jobs. In the U.S.A. for example, women account for 40% of total employment in the electronics industry but over 90% of assembly line workers, while men account for more than 90% of all technicians and engineers, and a high proportion of plant supervisors. 90% of assembly operators of the U.S. electronics industry are now located overseas in developing countries, but the more skilled jobs involving high technology and capital inputs are retained almost exclusively in the home country by vertically-integrated transnational corporations.

Overseas plants are designed only for low-skill assembly processes. Thus a recent survey in Singapore showed that operators still form 87% of the labour force in a typical electronics plant, supervisors 3%, technicians 5% and white-collar workers 5%, despite nearly a decade of government policies to encourage upgrading into higher-skilled, higher-producti-



vity operations. A similar sexual division of labour is observed in these overseas plants, with women being mostly assembly workers while men work in the few skilled jobs available. Women predominate in numbers in these specific industries because most of the manufacturing processes and products which are transferred to developing countries are those in which mainly women are employed in the developed countries as well. In fact the proportion of women in total employment generally is a good indicator of the structure of employment in industries: the higher this proportion, the more concentrated employment is in low level jobs.

In the developing countries, women's wages and earnings are generally lower than those of men in jobs of the same grade or skill level. Thus in some Asian countries, women workers in export industries receive less than half of the wages paid to men and in the other Asian countries, the differential between male and female wages is about a quarter to a third, mainly because of this differential, average wages in the export manufacturing sector are generally lower than for manufacturing as a whole. In Singapore, for example, wages in the export-oriented electronics industry are about a third below the average wages for the manufacturing sector. In some countries, factory wages for women are lower than the wages earned by women with the same educational qualifications in other sectors of the economy, but in other countries they are higher. Thus in the Republic of Korea, female high school graduates earn more in clerical occupations than they do in factory work, whereas in Mexico, *maquiladoras* workers earn more than do women in clerical, sales and other service sector occupations.

#### REASONS FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN

Most industries which redeploy to the developing countries with the main motive to export to developed countries prefer

to employ women workers because they are both cheaper and more productive in certain operations than men in developed and developing countries, and than women in developed countries. There are basically three sets of reasons which have been given for women's so-called "comparative advantage" in labour-intensive manufacturing : (1) Physical characteristics which make women more suited to certain kinds of labour-intensive work ; (2) Social and cultural attitudes, values and habits which inculcate in women behaviour patterns conducive to such labour-intensive work ; (3) Women's inferior position in the labour market and lack of alternative employment opportunities in both developed and developing countries, making them "willing to work" for lower wages than men. Each of these will be examined in turn in the following sections which relate the worker characteristics outlined in chapter II to labour costs and productivity.

*Physical Characteristics* : The usual and easiest explanation for labour intensive industries preference for women workers, is that women have a "natural" advantage in processes requiring manual dexterity, such as sewing and assembly work, because they have smaller fingers and are experienced with needlework in the home. It has been argued that young women possess "keener eyesight", "more agile hands", and "more nimble fingers" than men, making them more suited to detailed assembly work.

Thus the "higher degree of efficiency" with which women, compared to men, perform certain labour-intensive tasks has been attributed to special sex-typed physical characteristics. In one case where men and women were put to work under identical strict conditions in the electronics assembly industry, it was found that at their peak men could work as fast as women, but the yield loss (or proportion of defective output) was greater. This was attributed to the fact that men's fingers are "too big" and their movements "not delicate enough" for

assembly work. Even if it is accepted that all women are more manually dexterous than all men—and the management of the industries in question seems to base its employment policies thereon—it remains to be explained why young women are so strongly preferred. In Chapter IV this question will be dealt with.

*Social and Cultural Characteristics* : Most comments about the greater efficiency of female workers in certain labour-intensive industries combine the physical characteristics mentioned above with other characteristics which are probably the product of differential socialization and acculturation of males and females. Thus in the electronics assembly industry what is required of workers is 'good dexterity and eyesight and the right kind of mental attitudes'. Employers argue that women are 'innately better at the intricate, monotonous, eye-straining work typical of electronics production'. Such arguments are common to all cultures and societies. Girls are hired because they are 'easy to control', 'pleasant', 'nice' and 'co-operative'. Young men 'cannot sit for eight hours at a stretch', and are 'too impatient and ambitious' for work which has 'no future'. One firm experienced great 'discipline problems' with the 300 of its 4000 assembly operators who were male and frequently insubordinate e.g. refusing to obey female supervisors.

Given their differential socialization within traditional patriarchal societies, women tend to be more passive, docile and obedient to authority than men. Young women, mostly teenagers, are even more malleable and easy to discipline, being used to subordinate position in the male-dominated households from which they come. One reason why electronics firms, in particular, require a relatively high level of formal education even though this is not necessary given the low level of skills employed, is because they take it as an indicator that workers who 'stuck it out' through nine or more years of schooling are more likely to be conscientious and disciplined, and

better able to bear the long hours of meticulous, tedious and monotonous work on the assembly bench, than workers who dropped out of school early. At the same time, in some cases workers whose educational qualifications are higher than required are rejected because it is felt that they would become bored and dissatisfied with the work, and be always on the lookout for better job opportunities elsewhere. Personal interviews are often all-important in the job application selection procedure. Personnel managers attempt to assure that those selected to work have "suitable personalities", that is, are quiet, obedient and hardworking.

Finally, it should be noted that the rigid requirements for a labour force which is young, female, unmarried, relatively highly educated and possessed of the right personality characteristics, are variably enforced depending on the state of the labour market. Thus the age, marital status and education requirements are frequently relaxed during times of economic boom and labour shortage.

*Labour Market Status and Behaviour* : Industries which are female-intensive in developed countries are industries which are particularly amenable to redeployment to developing countries where wages are even lower than those of women in the developed countries. In addition to having lower wage rates than male workers, the physical, social and cultural characteristics previously discussed tend to make women more productive than men in these labour-intensive industries. Contrary to the neo-classical economic principles of marginal productivity factor pricing, we have a case where more productive workers are actually paid lower wages. Whereas in the developed countries employers justify paying women lower wages on grounds of their inferior labour market behaviour and *lower* productivity, in the developing countries they employ women in redeployed industries on the grounds of their *greater* productivity vis-a-vis men, as well as the fact they can pay them lower wages. Women's.

comparative advantage in redeployed industries is based on the lower unit labour costs of production (higher output at lower wages) which may be achieved by employing women instead of men.

These wage and productivity differentials need to be explained. Women's status in the labour market in developing countries resembles that of women in the developed countries. They are traditionally based in the home, and have few opportunities for paid employment outside the home. Occupational segregation by sex tends to be more widespread and rigid in developing countries, because of rigid sex-role stereotyping and taboos, strict segregation of the sexes in traditional societies, and the lack of sufficient employment opportunities for men, who are considered to be the main bread-winners. Thus the wage employment opportunities for women in developing countries are even more limited than those of women in the developed countries ; consequently their wages are even lower.

Employers, society and even the women themselves usually assume that women have limited financial obligations and career aspirations, since they will eventually leave work to marry and have children. This justifies giving women jobs with no prospects for advancement, and excluding them from training for more skilled jobs with better promotion possibilities. It also justifies giving them monotonous, repetitive jobs since it is assumed that they will work at them for only a short time.

The reportedly higher turnover rate of women than of men in developed countries is often considered to be a liability to employers, and one they are justified in overcoming by paying low wages and refraining from training women. In export industries relocated to developing countries, however, high turnover may, up to a point, be beneficial to employers and provide a further reason for their preference for hiring young single women. It should be recalled that manufacturing processes redeployed to developing countries for exports to developed countries are low-skilled tasks which can be learned in periods

varying from one day (pressing pants in a garments factory) to two weeks (microscope bonding of silicon chips in electronics assembly). Learning curves are short in these industries, with workers reaching the peak of their productivity, at the given technology, within a few months. Yet the wages of individual workers increase over time with annual increments, so that older workers are more costly than younger ones of roughly the same productivity. The fact that many young women are leaving to get married or have children is then well suited to the employer. However, the highly monotonous, repetitive operations and intense pace of work, inadequate working conditions and lack of opportunities for promotion also help to keep turnover high.

Since production for export is oriented to the world market, it is dependent on the economics of the developed nations, and vulnerable to their business fluctuations. This is particularly so where overseas plants or sub-contracts were established partly to absorb such fluctuations.

In societies where women have a secondary status in the labour force, it seems to be more "acceptable" for an industry which needs to lay off workers periodically to lay off women than men. This attitude is reflected in the calculation of unemployment statistics in one Asian country. Despite massive lay-offs during the 1974-75 world recession, unemployment in 1975 was actually calculated at the "full employment" rate of 4.5%, since it excluded "discouraged workers", mostly women who ceased to actively look for work because no work was available. Migrant workers also form a convenient reserve army, since they are often the first to be laid off when a recession hits, are not counted in unemployment statistics because they are not in the citizen labour force and are repatriated to their home countries when they lose their jobs. About half of those laid off during the 1974-75 recession in one Asian country were migrant workers in industries, the vast majority of them women.

Those industries which so far were relocated or sub-contrac-

ted to developing countries to manufacture for export back to the developed countries tend to be more vulnerable than other industries to world economic fluctuations and to changes in consumer taste in developed countries. These industries therefore tend to have a chronically unstable pattern of employment. This could mean that—due to the weak position of women in the local labour markets the prevailing short-term and insecure character of female employment in these industries is further accentuated and might be used as a permanent “comparative advantage” in the world market.

*The Role of Host Governments :* What role have host governments in developing countries played in the employment of women in redeployed industries ? On the one hand, many governments seem to have anticipated that redeploying industries would overwhelmingly employ female labour, and even encouraged the entry of women into the wage labour force in a number of ways. Thus a government investment brochure specifically mentioned as an attraction of that country for foreign investors the characteristics of the female labour force. Governments tend to remove existing “protective” legislation prohibiting night shift work for females in recognition of certain industries’ need for twenty-four hour operations. In certain cases governments also established housing estates for the working population, especially the female labour where export manufacturing industries are located. On the other hand, governments in many cases, especially in the initial stages of their export endeavours, were neither expecting nor particularly encouraging large scale female employment in these industries, especially since in most developing countries governments are primarily aiming at reducing the vast male unemployment rate. As was pointed out above, however, the concerned industries generally do prefer to hire women rather than men in the direct production and operator jobs. In their attempts to get more male workers employed, governments induce companies to establish other

types of production in which primarily male employment would be expected to be generated. However, it should be noted that relocation to developing countries for export purposes of labour-intensive industries is in the main motivated by the availability of cheap unskilled and semi-skilled labour.

#### IMPACT OF EMPLOYMENT IN REDEPLOYED INDUSTRIES ON WOMEN WORKERS

*Social Origins and Aspirations* : The social origins of women workers in redeployed export-oriented industries vary by country, and by location within countries. In Singapore and Hong Kong, the majority of factory workers are of urban working-class origins, though a sizeable minority in both countries are recent migrants. In Singapore, 15 per cent of the total labour force and a higher proportion of those in the manufacturing sector are migrant workers, or work permit holders. The majority of the migrants are from Malaysia, where they come from Chinese secondary urban centres and small towns, or from Malay rural farm villages. More recently, women workers have also immigrated from Thailand and other Asian countries to work in the labour-intensive factories.

In the Republic of Korea, Malaysia and the Philippines, workers' origins depend on the location of the factories. In zones close to major urban centres, most of the workers come from urban and semi-urban areas, although many also come from distant rural areas in search of employment. Where the zones are located in rural areas, e.g. as part of host governments' attempt at the regional dispersal of industry, the vast majority of workers come from surrounding farming areas. Malaysia and the Philippines have a higher proportion of workers of rural origin than does the Republic of Korea, which is more highly urbanized, and where the earliest indigenous export manufacturing industries were located in the major cities.



In the Mexican Border Zone, 70 per cent of maquiladoras workers are migrants from urban and semi-urban areas within Mexico, most of them having migrated with their families as young children in the previous generation. Only 8 per cent are from rural backgrounds.

The chief reason why young women seek employment in export-oriented factories is obviously the fact that these jobs provide income to these otherwise unemployed women. In urban areas like Singapore and Hong Kong, most working families require more than one wage-earner to maintain a minimum or slightly more comfortable standard of living. Daughters are sent out to work to help support their families, to meet payments for necessities and for improved standards of living which many urban families in developing countries have come to expect from their countries' development. In the predominantly Chinese countries of Singapore and Hong Kong, older daughters tend to be especially sent out to work to provide for the education of younger siblings, particularly sons, whose higher education represents the family's main hope for upward mobility. Often the working daughters' own education is therefore cut short in order that they may seek employment to fulfil family needs.

Also, high unemployment and the lack of jobs for males, has generally forced many women to take on wage labour in order to partially or totally support their families. One-third of the workers surveyed in one study done in Malaysia in 1973 had at least one member of the immediate family seeking employment, of whom two-thirds were males and 60 per cent had been out of work for a year or longer.

In the Mexican Border Zone, nearly one third of the women who work in the textile and garment manufacturing sector are heads of households and sole providers of income for their families. Where males are present, they often earn too little to support their large families.

Given the economic need of women in developing countries

for wage employment, what determines their choice of factory employment in particular ? In the Mexican Border industries as many as 40 per cent of the workers who had been previously employed had worked in the white collar and services sector, where their wages as clerks, secretaries, cashiers, salespersons, etc. were lower than the wages of assembly workers, and comparable with the wages of domestic servants. Thus work in the factories represents a step up in the occupational ladder, to higher incomes and benefits.

The situation is quite different in the Asian countries. White-collar employment generally pays higher wages than factory jobs but it is scarcer. In Malaysia, women who have graduated from secondary school prefer to work as nurses, school teachers and clerical workers, but such job opportunities are very limited. Even where certain jobs in the service sector, such as sales and hairdressing, pay lower wages, they are preferred to factory employment because of the stigma attached to factory work in certain countries. Indeed, in Singapore, where service sector jobs are plentiful, factories which are short of labour generally seem to find it difficult to hire women even at higher wages.

For Asian women, factory work offers a major opportunity for income, greater independence and better futures. But those who have the requisite qualifications keep looking for jobs in the white-collar sector, while those who have not finished high-school may go to night-school and study while working full-time in the factory in order to give themselves a chance for better jobs in the future. In Mexico, on the other hand, young women seem to strive only to achieve the minimum educational qualification required to work in the *maquiladoras*. Nearly all women expect eventually to leave the labour force to marry and have children.

*Employment and Mobility* : Labour force participation rates of women have increased dramatically in some countries because of industrial redeployment. Unfortunately, information is

available for only a few countries. In Hong Kong in 1971, 56.4 per cent of females between the ages of 15 and 19 were employed, of whom 82.5 per cent were in manufacturing industries; 88 per cent of females between the ages of 20 and 24 were in the labour force. In Singapore, female labour force participation rates rose from 10 per cent in 1968, when export manufacturing was first introduced, to more than one-third a decade later. The size of the female labour force increased by half between 1970 and 1974, compared to an 8 per cent increase in the male labour force. Female employment increased by 72 per cent in these few years, while male employment rose by 13 per cent, and women accounted for two-thirds of the total increase in the labour force. 85 per cent of unmarried women and 63 per cent of married women without children, between the ages of 20 and 29 were employed, as well as 50 per cent of mothers over the age of 40. In Malaysia, 36 per cent of all women are employed; they account for one-third of the total labour force and over half of the labour force in manufacturing.

Job mobility is restricted for women workers in export manufacturing industries. The vast majority of them are employed in low-level jobs with no prospects for upward mobility because of the unbalanced job structure in these industries. Men are preferred for the few skilled jobs available. At the same time, women learn few, if any, transferable skills—most of their tasks as operators can be learned in one day to two weeks, and may be industry—or even firm-specific, as in electronics assembly. Thus the experience gained in factory work does not seem to enhance their prospects of obtaining other kinds of employment. In these circumstances, “job-hopping” from one factory to another in the same industry and same line of work is often the only way in which a worker can hope to better her employment conditions. Unskilled workers are interchangeable between tasks and industries. In some cases, however, even this limited degree of horizontal mobility may be lacking, for example, in recession when alternative jobs.

are hard to find. Also, it has been occasionally noted that companies have colluded with each other to discourage factory-hopping in the Free Trade Zones, by "blacklisting" workers who leave one factory in search of a better-paid job in another. The accumulation of seniority and accompanying higher wages and benefits is another barrier to horizontal mobility, except in times of extreme labour shortage when firms are willing to "poach" workers from each other. In some countries, migrant workers are further prevented by their work permit restrictions from changing jobs for three years.

Job security is also tenuous in many branches of export manufacturing industries, where employment is highly unstable and temporary or permanent lay-offs are common. During the 1974/75 world recession, for example, half of the 40,000 workers in Mexico's maquiladoras were laid off. Three quarters of the 17,000 workers who lost their jobs in Singapore were women. There are also significant lay-offs in textile and electronic factories in other Asian countries. In the Philippines, one small survey showed that half of the workers interviewed had been laid off in 1975 for periods ranging from two weeks to nine months. For the worker who is laid off, re-hiring at the end of the recession is by no means assured. New, younger workers are preferred, and even if re-hired, the experienced worker is often paid only the starting wage. In some countries, lay-offs are a response to more than cyclical market fluctuations. Companies may reduce their labour force or even close down because they are shifting to new, cheaper locations. This has happened, for example, with the shift of some processes and enterprises out of Mexico to the Far East in the early 1970s, and in Singapore, where rising wages have caused labour-intensive industries to move some of their processes to Malaysia and Indonesia. Thus for some countries, at least, employment in foreign-controlled, footloose industries is not only cyclically unstable, it may be also uncertain in the long run. However, this shifting of location of labour-intensive industries is

obviously a reflection of the national development and diversification of industry and hence of the country's restructuring process. The danger is that the adjustment costs of this process are solely charged to female labour and that no provision is made for absorbing women in this long-term process.

The described relatively high voluntary and involuntary turnover naturally affects average duration of employment in the foreign, export-oriented industries in developing countries and, in particular, women workers. In the developed countries, the average work-life of a woman in these labour-intensive industries is about ten years ; in Mexico it is six years, the Republic of Korea seven years, and in some of the South-East Asian countries less than two years. Women who leave work to get married and have children, find it very difficult to get jobs later, for example, when they have had a couple of children and need to re-enter the labour force in order to support their families. Most employers seem to be against hiring married women with children because of the need to pay maternity benefits, and because they believe that married women are more unreliable workers, e.g. with respect to absenteeism and turnover rates.

On the other hand, some employers prefer married women because they are "more stable" since they must work out of dire economic need (otherwise, given strong traditional role-orientations, they would not), will not leave on getting married, and have fewer alternative job opportunities to induce voluntary turnover.

*Income and Expenditure :* As previously discussed, the wages earned by women workers in labour-intensive export industries are usually lower than those of equivalent male workers, and below the minimum budget requirements for a family in most places. Beyond this, there are considerable variations in income and expenditure patterns according to country, industry and individual. In particular, expenditure patterns vary according

to whether the worker lives at home with her family, or in a dormitory or rented accommodations near her place of work. Workers who live at home contribute more of their income to their families. In Hong Kong, a 1970 survey of 660 young factory workers aged between 14 and 21 showed that 40 per cent of them gave all of their incomes to their families, while 88 per cent gave at least half. In Malaysia, most electronics workers give between 25 per cent and 60 per cent of their incomes to their families. In Mexico, maquiladora workers on the average contribute more than half of their weekly earnings to the support of their families. The average dependency ratio for electronics workers in Malaysia and the Republic of Korea is one, while in Mexico it is much higher because the vast majority of maquiladora workers live in large family groups who rely heavily or solely on their incomes to survive.

Even a single working woman has considerable expenses to meet out of her wages. She has to pay for rent and food, which can often be exorbitantly priced in the area around the industrial locations. Transportation is another major expense, both for those who live at home, far from their place of work, and for those who live away from home but visit their families regularly. Clothing and other necessities take up most of the remainder. For women with starting wages there thus seems to be little left for recreation or savings for marriage or for further education. Indeed, a recent study of women workers in American electronics plants in Asia shows the ratio of starting monthly wages to monthly expenses (basic rent, food and transportation) in a number of countries. In Indonesia this was 74 per cent, in the Philippines 108 per cent, in Malaysia 126 per cent, and in Hong Kong 110 per cent. After two years' employment, the ratio of monthly wages to expenses changed to 113 per cent in Indonesia, 203 per cent in the Philippines, 222 per cent in Malaysia, and 152 per cent in Hong Kong. In 1979, the average monthly wages of a woman electronics worker who had been working for two years were U.S. \$ 30 in

Indonesia, \$ 75 in the Philippines \$ 100 in Malaysia, and \$ 187 in Hong Kong. Any surplus over the basic subsistence needs is contributed to the family.

*Working Conditions, Health and Welfare :* Generally speaking, working conditions seem to be better in electronics than in textile and garments factories, and better in large trans-nationals than in small domestic factories. In all observed countries, government regulations exist on the hours and conditions of work, but they are often either lax, or are not obeyed or enforced. Given poor working conditions, especially in the textile industry, health and safety problems abound. Respiratory diseases, eye and stomach problems and nervous disorders are said to be common. Hearing impairment and the inhalation of textile dust are common problems.

Workers usually prefer working in electronics than in textile or garment factories. However, it should be noted that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in the U.S A. has placed electronics on its select list of "high health risk industries using the greatest number of hazardous substances". The health and safety problems are numerous and serious. Eye complaints are common in the electronics assembly industry. One survey in an Asian country found that most workers in this sector developed severe eye problems within the first year of employment : 88 per cent had chronic conjunctivitis, 44 per cent became near-sighted, and 19 per cent developed astigmatism. Similar results have been obtained in studies in other countries. A 1975 survey of workers in an American firm in Asia found that 44 per cent complained of deteriorating eye-sight and 42 per cent of headaches, caused by eye-strain from looking through highly magnified microscopes for seven to nine hours a day in the bonding process.

The commonly used solvents in the electronics assembly industry are suspected of being carcinogens. Metal solder fumes may cause shortage of breath, nausea, reproductive problems, kidney and liver damage and cancer. The health risks become

acute where there is an absence of adequate protection and workers are not trained or informed of the dangers of working with chemicals.

A third source of health problems is the practice of rotating shift work every week or every two weeks in factories which are operated twenty-four hours a day. Whereas in the U.S.A., studies have found that rotating shifts are destructive to workers' health, shifts are frequently promoted by companies located in developing countries. There are indications that in some cases married women are permanently hired on the late-night shift and do house-work and care for their families in the day, while working in the factory at night.

Finally, the fast pace and intensity of monotonous, repetitive assembly work in the tense and rigidly disciplined environment of export-oriented electronics factories aggravates nervousness and stomach ailments, while forced overtime and production speed-ups increase fatigue and the likelihood of accidents. The intensity of work undoubtedly contributes to the high turnover rates. The rates are about 5 per cent and 10 per cent a month in normal periods and as much as 50 per cent in peak periods of labour shortage during economic booms.

In the developing countries labour in general is weakly organized ; organization of female labour is almost non-existent, given their high turnover rates, lack of work experience, and passivity. Male-dominated national unions have also frequently been disinterested in organizing female workers. Given this lack of organization, it is not surprising that labour action to improve wages and working conditions is rare. Yet, in spite of the constraints facing them, labour actions do periodically occur among female workers even among unorganized workers.

Strikes by women workers in foreign textile, electronics and other factories have been reported from several countries.

*Living Conditions :* Because of low wages, living conditions of most women workers in export manufacturing industries can



be classified as poor. Inadequate *housing* is perhaps the biggest problem. Since workers are drawn to the export manufacturing zones from a wide radius, many if not most of them have to seek rented accommodations in the vicinity of their work. Few factories provide dormitory space for workers, and where they do it is likely to be crowded, with bed rotation paralleling shift rotation.

Rented accommodation is often difficult or expensive to obtain, especially where the industrial zones with their concentrated employment of as many as 20,000 women in one zone are located in rural areas. Around the zones, workers are therefore forced to pay exorbitant rents for "deplorable" housing conditions. Even where workers live at home, poverty may mean that living conditions are poor.

*Demographic Behaviour* : The creation of mass female employment opportunities in industries has a significant, if not profound, impact on the demographic behaviour of the young women who work in the factories.

The pattern of women's job and marriage cycle is still largely traditional. It is common in the countries observed that a girl usually begins factory work around age 17, stays at work for 6-7 years, and when she marries around 24 years of age, enters into full-time housewife-motherhood. In certain cases, however, workers in the export manufacturing sector may find their marriage opportunities limited because of the extreme sex imbalance of workplace environments, making it difficult to meet and socialize with members of the opposite sex.

There is some evidence that the experience of wage employment tends to reduce the number of children which a woman has, especially where active public family planning programmes are in operation, as in most of the Asian countries. The later age of marriage in itself would tend to reduce the number of children per woman and economic pressures reinforce this. When a married woman has to go to work to help support her

family, she can afford to have fewer children because she has less time to care for them. Studies in Singapore and Hong Kong show that the desire for upward economic and social mobility is the main motivation for women workers to reduce fertility and family size. This they do not only for job related reasons but also because they wish to devote savings to bettering the family's standard of living and the children's future prospects.

On the other hand, married women whose husbands can support them often leave the work force because they find that low wages do not compensate for the costs of their working, including private child-care costs, lunch and transportation expenses. When wages increase, they are more likely to stay on the job. Thus, while low wages of men tend to force married women back into the labour force, low wages of females tend to keep them out of it and in the home. In addition, evidence shows that the possibilities for women who wish to re-enter the labour force after marriage and childbirth are limited by company practices. These women seem to be handicapped by age and family responsibilities.

Employment in female-intensive industries has also generated massive migration flows of young women in developing countries. In Latin-America already, a majority of migrants are young women, who migrate to seek wage employment to support themselves and their families. In certain Asian countries large numbers of young women migrate alone or with their families from rural areas to big cities and the industrial zones where they find employment.

In Singapore perhaps as much as half of the female manufacturing labour force consists of migrant workers from Malaysia, Thailand, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. They tend to be a more stable and productive labour force than native Singaporeans, because of the insecurity of their position as foreign workers, and restrictions of their work permits.

Generally, the situation of immigrant female labour seems to be particularly insecure and hard.

*Social and Cultural Behaviour :* Women workers in the observed industries are subject to a number of different social and cultural influences which affect their later behaviour. First, there is the impact of the factory culture itself, some aspects of which resemble traditional culture, and other aspects, some of which are quite different and require a major adjustment too.

Where workers come from predominantly rural backgrounds, their values are likely to be those of a more leisurely co-operative life with economic and social relations centred on the family and community, rather than on the individual worker. So a variety of incentive measures are frequently seen necessary to be enacted in the factory to instil habits of punctuality and diligence.

On the other hand there are values of traditional society which can enhance workers' productivity in the factory, such as obedience to (paternal) authority, hard work, honesty, discipline and self-denial. Women accept their subordinate position at the bottom of the factory hierarchy, as they do in traditional patriarchal societies.

A major source of social and cultural influence on young women workers is their living away from home in urban or semi-urban areas, where they are exposed to many kinds of "modern" i.e. Western, influences. Away from family and social controls, and subject to peer groups, mass media and factory culture influences, many young women exercise their new-found personal independence in a way which arouses the antagonism of conservative local communities. Workers' morality has, in some countries, become a hot issue for local community leaders, women's groups, welfare organizations and politicians.

Thus it is difficult to tell whether the local community's antagonism to factory girls is original, or merely a reaction to

the life-style and behaviour which some of them adopt while working in foreign factories. What does happen is that in some areas factory work gives women a "bad name". As "girl labourers" they are "despised", and their social status degraded rather than enhanced by their employment in manufacturing industries. It is argued that many of these women become "misfits" when they return to their home communities, if they to return, and find it difficult to obtain decent marriage partners.

But in patriarchal societies and cultures which have conservative traditional attitudes towards women, and generally confine them to the domestic economy and in non-ionetized productive activities such as subsistence farming, the provision of wage employment away from the home and family may be viewed by the women themselves as a "liberating" experience. They are granted a measure of economic independence, personal freedom, access to a wider range of life experiences and activities, and an expression of individual identityall of which they never had before and which they value. Similar conclusions have been drawn from studies in other Asian countries. In some of these, working women's position in their families is somewhat improved : they have more freedom and are allowed to make more decisions, although still subordinate to family authority for the most part.

The net result of positive and negative social effects of women's work in redeployed industries cannot be estimated without more research, in particular, research which follows the women and their communities through and past the period of their employment in export-oriented industries.

*Summary :* Women who work in foreign, export-oriented industries come from both urban and rural social origins, and seek wage employment in industry because of the economic need to support themselves and their families. Such employment gives them low wages which nevertheless make an

important contribution to family support in many cases. Where the wages earned are above subsistence, the women and their families may enjoy some improvement in their low standards of living. However, the employment provided in most foreign export industries is in lowskilled jobs which promise no vertical and little horizontal mobility. The jobs are unstable and insecure because of the vulnerability of these industries to cyclical market fluctuations and long-run market and technological changes. In addition, employers prefer young unmarried workers and older workers are often laid off and find it difficult to enter or re-enter the factory labour force, even at lower wages. Working conditions are poor in the textile and garments industry especially, but serious health hazards exist in the electronics assembly industry as well. Voluntary as well as involuntary turnover rates are high, and the employment generally lasts only a few years. The benefits women derive from their employment are thus only temporary.

Labour organization among women factory workers in developing countries is minimal, and labour movements are often repressed. Yet there are incidents of labour action in support of wage and working condition demands. Living conditions outside the factory are generally poor, the main problems in most countries being inadequate and costly housing and transportation facilities.

Female employment in industry may lead to delayed marriage and smaller families for women workers; it also induces long-distance and international migration of young women. They are subject to various social and cultural influences both inside and outside the workplace, which affect their life-styles and behaviour patterns. While factory employment gives the women some personal independence and freedom, their new behaviour is often resented by local communities. Social and cultural conflicts develop which may reduce rather than enhance women's social status, though their economic position is temporarily improved.

the foreign industries through the construction and maintenance of industrial estates and the opportunity cost of tax revenues forgone in the exemptions from tariffs and taxes which these industries enjoy.

*Social Impact :* The large-scale entry of women into the labour force is usually considered to be progressive social phenomenon, and one which has occurred in all the developed countries. It is argued that paid employment enhances the economic and social position of women, and contribute to equality between the sexes.

Undoubtedly there are positive social effects from the employment of women in industry, including foreign redeployed industries. Women's economic position is temporarily enhanced, and they enjoy new social freedoms and greater independence. They develop certain progressive social attitudes, such as the desire to have fewer children, and the desire for upward social mobility. To the extent that they also imbibe certain of the "modern" values of the factory such as discipline, punctuality, competitiveness and responsiveness to individual monetary incentives—and transmit them to the new generation through their responsibility for childrearing, there may be a positive "developmental" impact on society in the long run. However, many industries in developing countries today the low wages and poor working conditions of female employment tend to reduce its beneficence.

While industrialization always brings with it social tensions and conflicts, the employment of women in foreign dominated industries in developing countries seems to generate open or potential multiple conflicts. First, there are conflicts between traditional local communities on the one hand, and the women workers, their employers and the host government on the other, regarding the desirability and necessity of factory jobs, especially for women. Second, there are the increasing conflicts between the women as workers on the one hand, and their em-

ployers and governments on the other, over the conditions of employment and labour organization and action. Third, there are potential and actual conflicts between the sexes on many levels. Unemployed males may resent the employment of females, feeling that this constitutes their own employment opportunities and lowers the general wage level; thus, for example, male-dominated unions are often hostile to organizing female workers. Family relationships may be affected as women increasingly become important or sole supporters of the family, since they obtain jobs while men—fathers, brothers and husbands—remain unemployed.

# **CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN**

## **INTRODUCTION**

A major step towards the attainment of the goal of equal rights for women was taken on 18 December 1979, when the General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against women. The 30-article Convention sets out in legally binding form internationally accepted principles and measures to achieve equal rights for women everywhere. Its adoption climaxed consultations over a five-year period by various working groups, the Commission on the status of Women and the General Assembly.

The comprehensive Convention reflects the depth of the exclusion and restriction practised against women solely on the basis of their sex, by calling for equal rights for women, regardless of their marital status, in all fields—political, economic, social, cultural and civil. It calls for national legislation to ban discrimination; recommends temporary special measures to speed equality in fact between men and women, and action to modify social and cultural patterns that perpetuate discrimination.

Other measures provide for equal rights of women in political and public life; equal access to education and the same



choice of curricula; non-discrimination in employment and pay; and guarantees of job security in the event of marriage and maternity. The Convention underlines the equal responsibilities of men with women in the context of family life. It also stresses the social services needed—especially child-care facilities—for combining family obligations with work responsibilities and participation in public life.

Additional articles of the Convention call for non-discriminatory health services to women, including services related to family planning and a legal capacity identical to that of men, with States parties agreeing that all contracts and other private instruments that restrict the legal capacity of women “shall be deemed null and void”. Special attention is given to the problems of rural women.

The Convention sets up machinery for the international supervision of the obligations accepted by States. A committee of experts, to be elected by States parties and serving in a personal capacity, will consider the progress made.

Opened for signature on 1 March 1980, the Convention will enter into force after 20 States have consented to be bound by its provisions, either through ratification or accession.

The full text of the Convention is set out in the pages that follow.

#### CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

*The States Parties to the present Convention,*

*Noting* that the Charter of the United Nations reaffirms faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women,

*Noting* that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirms the principle of the inadmissibility of discrimination and proclaims that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, including distinction based on sex,

*Noting* that the States Parties to the International Covenants on Human Rights have the obligation to ensure the equal right of men and women to enjoy all economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights,

*Considering* the international conventions concluded under the auspices of the United Nations and the specialized agencies promoting equality of rights of men and women,

*Noting also* the resolutions, declarations and recommendations adopted by the United Nations and the specialized agencies promoting equality of rights of men and women,

*Concerned*, however, that despite these various instruments extensive discrimination against women continues to exist,

*Recalling* that discrimination against women violates the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity, is an obstacle to the participation of women, on equal terms with men, in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their countries, hampers the growth of the prosperity of society and the family and makes more difficult the full development of the potentialities of women in the service of their countries and of humanity,

*Concerned* that in situations of poverty women have the least access to food, health, education, training and opportunities for employment and other needs,

*Convinced* that the establishment of the new international economic order based on equity and justice will contribute significantly towards the promotion of equality between men and women,

*Emphasising* that the eradication of *apartheid*, of all forms of racism, racial discrimination, colonialism, neo-colonialism, aggression, foreign occupation and domination and interference in the internal affairs of States is essential to the full enjoyment of the rights of men and women,

*Affirming* that the strengthening of international peace and security, relaxation of international tension, mutual co-operation among all States irrespective of their social and economic

systems, general and complete disarmament, and in particular nuclear disarmament under strict and effective international control, the affirmation of the principles of justice, equality and mutual benefit in relations among countries and the realization of the right of peoples under alien and colonial domination and foreign occupation to self-determination and independence, as well as respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity, will promote social progress and development and as a consequence will contribute to the attainment of full equality between men and women,

*Convinced* that the full and complete development of a country, the welfare of the world and the cause of peace require the maximum participation of women on equal terms with men in all fields,

*Bearing in mind* the great contribution of women to the welfare of the family and to the development of society, so far not fully recognized, the social significance of maternity and the role of both parents in the family and in the upbringing of children, and aware that the role of women in procreation should not be a basis for discrimination but that the upbringing of children requires a sharing of responsibility between men and women and society as a whole,

*Aware* that a change in the traditional role of men as well as the role of women in society and in the family is needed to achieve full equality between men and women,

*Determined* to implement the principles set forth in the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and, for that purpose, to adopt the measures required for the elimination of such discrimination in all its forms and manifestations,

*Have agreed* on the following :

#### ARTICLE I

For the purposes of the present Convention the term "discrimination against women" shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or

purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

#### ARTICLE 2

States Parties condemn discrimination against women in all its forms, agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women and, to this end, undertake :

a. To embody the principle of the equality of men and women in their national constitutions or other appropriate legislation if not yet incorporated therein and to ensure, through law and other appropriate means, the practical realization of this principle ;

b. To adopt appropriate legislative and other measures, including sanctions where appropriate, prohibiting all discrimination against women ;

c. To establish legal protection of the rights of women on an equal basis with men and to ensure through competent national tribunals and other public institutions the effective protection of women against any act of discrimination ;

d. To refrain from engaging in any act or practice of discrimination against women and to ensure that public authorities and institutions shall act in conformity with this obligation ;

e. To take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women by any person, organization or enterprise ;

f. To take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which constitute discrimination against women ;

g. To repeal all national penal provisions which constitute discrimination against women.

#### ARTICLE 3

States Parties shall take in all fields, in particular in the political,

social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men.

ARTICLE 4

1. Adoption by States Parties of temporary special measures aimed at accelerating *de facto* equality between men and women shall not be considered discrimination as defined in the present Convention, but shall in no way entail as a consequence the maintenance of unequal or separate standards; these measures shall be discontinued when the objectives of equality of opportunity and treatment have been achieved.

2. Adoption by States Parties of special measures, including those measures contained in the present Convention, aimed at protecting maternity shall not be considered discriminatory.

ARTICLE 5

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures :

a. To modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women ;

b. To ensure that family education includes a proper understanding of maternity as a social function and the recognition of the common responsibility of men and women in the upbringing and development of their children, it being understood that the interest of the children is the primordial consideration in all cases.

ARTICLE 6

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women.

ARTICLE 7

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate

discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right :

a. To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies ;

b. To participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government ;

c. To participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.

#### ARTICLE 8

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, on equal terms with men and without any discrimination, the opportunity to represent their Governments at the international level and to participate in the work of international organizations.

#### ARTICLE 9

1. States Parties shall grant women equal rights with men to acquire, change or retain their nationality. They shall ensure in particular that neither marriage to an alien nor change of nationality by the husband during marriage shall automatically change the nationality of the wife, render her stateless or force upon her the nationality of the husband.

2. States Parties shall grant women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children.

#### ARTICLE 10

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women :

a. The same conditions for career and vocational guidance, for access to studies and for the achievement of diplomas in educational establishments of all categories in rural as well as

in urban areas ; this equality shall be ensured in pre-school, general, technical, professional and higher technical education, as well as in all types of vocational training ;

*b.* Access to the same curricula, the same examinations, teaching staff with qualifications of the same standard and school premises and equipment of the same quality ;

*c.* The elimination of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging coeducation and other types of education which will help to achieve this aim and, in particular, by the revision of textbooks and school programmes and the adaptation of teaching methods ;

*d.* The same opportunities to benefit from scholarships and other study grants ;

*e.* The same opportunities for access to programmes of continuing education, including adult and functional literacy programmes, particularly those aimed at reducing, at the earliest possible time, any gap in education existing between men and women ;

*f.* The reduction of female student drop-out rates and the organization of programmes for girls and women who have left school prematurely ;

*g.* The same opportunities to participate actively in sports and physical education ;

*h.* Access to specific educational information to help to ensure the health and well-being of families, including information and advice on family planning.

#### ARTICLE 11

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights, in particular :

*a.* The right to work as an inalienable right of all human beings ;

*b.* The right to the same employment opportunities, includ-

b. To have access to adequate health care facilities, including information, counselling and services in family planning ;

c. To benefit directly from social security programmes ;

d. To obtain all types of training and education, formal, and non-formal, including that relating to functional literacy, as well as, *inter alia*, the benefit of all community and extension services. in order to increase their technical proficiency ;

e. To organize self-help groups and co-operatives in order to obtain equal access to economic opportunities through employment or self-employment ;

f. To participate in all community activities ;

g. To have access to agricultural credit and loans, marketing facilities, appropriate technology and equal treatment in land and agrarian reform as well as in land resettlement schemes ;

h. To enjoy adequate living conditions, particularly in relation to housing, sanitation, electricity and water supply, transport and communications.

#### ARTICLE 15

1. States Parties shall accord to women equality with men before the law.

2. States Parties shall accord to women, in civil matters, a legal capacity identical to that of men and the same opportunities to exercise that capacity. In particular, they shall give women equal rights to conclude contracts and to administer property and shall treat them equally in all stages of procedure in courts and tribunals.

3. States Parties agree that all contracts and all other private instruments of any kind with a legal effect which is directed at restricting the legal capacity of women shall be deemed null and void.

4. States Parties shall accord to men and women the same rights with regard to the law relating to the movement of persons and the freedom to choose their residence and domicile.



ARTICLE 16

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations and in particular shall ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women :

- a.* The same right to enter into marriage ;
- b.* The same right freely to choose a spouse and to enter into marriage only with their free and full consent ;
- c.* The same rights and responsibilities during marriage and at its dissolution ;
- d.* The same rights and responsibilities as parents, irrespective of their marital status, in matters relating to their children ; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount ;
- e.* The same rights to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education and means to enable them to exercise these rights ;
- f.* The same rights and responsibilities with regard to guardianship, wardship, trusteeship and adoption of children, or similar institutions where these concepts exist in national legislation ; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount ;
- g.* The same personal rights as husband and wife, including the right to choose a family name, a profession and an occupation ;
- h.* The same rights for both spouses in respect of the ownership, acquisition, management, administration, enjoyment and disposition of property, whether free of charge or for a valuable consideration.

2. The betrothal and the marriage of a child shall have no legal effect, and all necessary action, including legislation, shall be taken to specify a minimum age for marriage and to make the registration of marriages in an official registry compulsory.

ARTICLE 17

1. For the purpose of considering the progress made in the implementation of the present Convention, there shall be established a Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (hereinafter referred to as the Committee) consisting, at the time of entry into force of the Convention, of eighteen and, after ratification of or accession to the Convention by the thirty-fifth State Party, of twenty-three experts of high moral standing and competence in the field covered by the Convention. The experts shall be elected by States Parties from among their nationals and shall serve in their personal capacity, consideration being given to equitable geographical distribution and to the representation of the different forms of civilization as well as the principal legal systems.
2. The members of the Committee shall be elected by secret ballot from a list of persons nominated by States Parties. Each State Party may nominate one person from among its own nationals.
3. The initial election shall be held six months after the date of the entry into force of the present Convention. At least three months before the date of each election the Secretary-General of the United Nations shall address a letter to the States Parties inviting them to submit their nominations within two months. The Secretary-General shall prepare a list in alphabetical order of all persons thus nominated, indicating the States Parties which have nominated them, and shall submit it to the States Parties.
4. Elections of the members of the Committee shall be held at a meeting of States Parties convened by the Secretary General at United Nations Headquarters. At that meeting, for which two thirds of the States Parties shall constitute a quorum, the persons elected to the Committee shall be those nominees who obtain the largest number of votes and an absolute majority of the votes of the representatives of States Parties present and voting.
5. The members of the Committee shall be elected for a

term of four years. However, the terms of nine of the members elected at the first election shall expire at the end of two years; immediately after the first election the names of these nine members shall be chosen by lot by the Chairman of the Committee.

6. The election of the five additional members of the Committee shall be held in accordance with the provisions of paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of this article, following the thirty-fifth ratification or accession. The terms of two of the additional members elected on this occasion shall expire at the end of two years, the names of these two members having been chosen by lot by the Chairman of the Committee.

7. For the filling of casual vacancies, the State Party whose expert has ceased to function as a member of the Committee shall appoint another expert from among its nationals, subject to the approval of the Committee.

8. The members of the Committee shall, with the approval of the General Assembly, receive emoluments from United Nations resources on such terms and conditions as the Assembly may decide, having regard to the importance of the Committee's responsibilities.

9. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall provide the necessary staff and facilities for the effective performance of the functions of the Committee under the present Convention.

#### ARTICLE 18

1. States Parties undertake to submit to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, for consideration by the Committee, a report on the legislative, judicial, administrative or other measures which they have adopted to give effect to the provisions of the present Convention and on the progress made in this respect :

*a.* Within one year after the entry into force for the State concerned ; and

*b.* Thereafter at least every four years and further whenever the Committee so requests.

2. Reports may indicate factors and difficulties affecting the degree of fulfilment of obligations under the present Convention.

ARTICLE 19

1. The Committee shall adopt its own rules of procedure.

2. The Committee shall elect its officers for a term of two years.

ARTICLE 20

1. The Committee shall normally meet for a period of not more than two weeks annually in order to consider the reports submitted in accordance with article 18 of the present convention.

2. The meetings of the Committee shall normally be held at United Nations Headquarters or at any other convenient place as determined by the Committee.

ARTICLE 21

1. The Committee shall, through the Economic and Social Council, report annually to the General Assembly of the United Nations on its activities and may make suggestions and general recommendations based on the examination of reports and information received from the States Parties. Such suggestions and general recommendations shall be included in the reports of the Committee together with comments, if any, from States Parties.

2. The Secretary-General shall transmit the reports of the Committee to the Commission on the Status of Women for its information.

ARTICLE 22

The specialized agencies shall be entitled to be represented at the consideration of the implementation of such provisions of the present Convention as fall within the scope of their activities. The Committee may invite the specialized agencies to submit reports on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities.

ARTICLE 23

Nothing in this Convention shall affect any provisions that are more conducive to the achievement of equality between men and women which may be contained :

*a.* In the legislation of a State Party ; or

*b.* In any other international convention, treaty or agreement in force for that State.

ARTICLE 24

States Parties undertake to adopt all necessary measures at the national level aimed at achieving the full realization of the rights recognized in the present Convention.

ARTICLE 25

1. The present Convention shall be open for signature by all States.

2. The Secretary-General of the United Nations is designated as the depositary of the present Convention.

3. The present Convention is subject to ratification. Instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

4. The present Convention shall be open to accession by all States. Accession shall be effected by the deposit of an instrument of accession with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

ARTICLE 26

1. A request for the revision of the present Convention may be made at any time by any State Party by means of a notification in writing addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

2. The General Assembly of the United Nations shall decide upon the steps, if any, to be taken in respect of such a request.

ARTICLE 27

1. The present Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the date of deposit with the Secretary-General

of the United Nations of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession.

2. For each State ratifying the present Convention or acceding to it after the deposit of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession, the Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the date of the deposit of its own instrument of ratification or accession.

#### ARTICLE 28

1. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall receive and circulate to all States the text of reservations made by States at the time of ratification or accession.

2. A reservation incompatible with the object and purpose of the present Convention shall not be permitted.

3. Reservations may be withdrawn at any time by notification to this effect addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall then inform all States thereof. Such notification shall take effect on the date on which it is received.

#### ARTICLE 29

1. Any dispute between two or more States Parties concerning the interpretation or application of the present Convention which is not settled by negotiation shall, at the request of one of them, be submitted to arbitration. If within six months from the date of the request for arbitration the parties are unable to agree on the organization of the arbitration, any one of those parties may refer the dispute to the International Court of Justice by request in conformity with the Statute of the Court.

2. Each State Party may at the time of signature or ratification of this Convention or accession thereto declare that it does not consider itself bound by paragraph 1 of this article. The other States Parties shall not be bound by that paragraph with respect to any State Party which has made such a reservation.

3. Any State Party which has made a reservation in accordance with paragraph 2 of this article may at any time with-

draw that reservation by notification to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

ARTICLE 30

The present Convention, the Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts of which are equally authentic, shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

# **WORLD CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED NATION DECADE FOR WOMEN : EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### *Why is The Conference Being Held ?*

1980 is the mid-point of the United Nations Decade for Women. The Conference is being held to evaluate what has been done by Governments to improve the situation of women worldwide and to plan for what should happen during the second half of the Decade.

### *What is the Decade for Women ?*

It all started with International Women's Year in 1975. At the UN intergovernmental conference held in Mexico that year, and at its associated nongovernmental Tribune, people from all over the world gathered to discuss the situation of women and what could be done to improve it. As a result the Conference adopted a World Plan of Action for the advancement of women. This Plan established a series of actions for governments to take during the next ten years : this was the beginning of the Decade for Women which runs from 1976 to 1985. The goals of the Decade are equality, development and peace.

### *What do the Goals of the Decade Mean ?*

Equality does not only mean achieving legal equality for



women and eliminating discrimination against them. It also means women having equality of rights, responsibilities and opportunities in every aspect of life. But this can only happen if women have the means, the money and the power, on the same basis as men, to allow them to take an equal role. To achieve this "affirmative action" for women may be required, at least temporarily, to compensate for and correct past injustices.

Development means growth and improvement for women in every field : economic, social, political, cultural and all other dimensions of human life. And it must be part of the world-wide movement to establish the new international economic order which aims at a more fair and equitable sharing of the world's resources between countries and people.

Without peace and stability there can be no development. And peace will not be lasting without equality, without eliminating inequalities at all levels, between men and women, between the haves and the have-nots within countries, and between nations themselves. Therefore the three objectives of the Decade are closely connected : progress or failure in any one has an effect on the others. This is why governments decided that all three must be worked for simultaneously.

*How can these Goals be Achieved ?*

If the Plan of Action drawn up in Mexico is put into practice by governments, the goals of the Decade would be within reach.

The recommendations in the Plan are designed to solve the problems which have caused women to be in an inferior position to men throughout the world. They seek to eliminate discrimination against women and to increase women's involvement in every aspect of life. Specifically, the Plan lists 14 minimum objectives which Governments were to achieve by 1980, half way through the Decade :

1. Increase literacy rates, especially for rural women.
2. Extend co-educational technical and vocational training.

3. Provide equal access to education, establish compulsory primary education, and prevent school drop outs.
4. Increase job opportunities for women, reduce unemployment, and eliminate on-the-job discrimination.
5. Increase support services.
6. Introduce laws guaranteeing equality for women and ensuring their right to vote and stand for elected office on an equal basis with men.
7. Make sure there are more women in policy-making jobs at all levels.
8. Increase welfare services for health education, sanitation, nutrition, family education and family planning.
9. Ensure equality in the exercise of civil, social and political rights.
10. Recognize the economic value of women's unpaid work.
11. Re-evaluate the roles of men and women through education.
12. Promote women's units within trade unions and in educational, economic and professional institutions.
13. Develop modern rural technology, day-care centres, cottage industries, and time-and-energy saving devices to reduce the heavy work load of women, particularly those in rural areas and urban slums.
14. Establish government machinery to speed up the achievement of equal opportunities for women and their full participation in national life.

#### THE PRESENT SITUATION OF WOMEN

##### *How well have Governments Implemented the plan of Action ?*

Most Governments have adopted strategies for the advancement of women which explicitly or implicitly incorporate the recommendations of the World Plan of Action. Most countries now have legislation guaranteeing equal rights for women and many Governments have established women's bureaus and commissions to speed up the achievement of equal opportunities.

Yet despite this many women are worse off to day than they were five years ago, particularly those in rural and poorer urban areas. For example :

- \* female illiteracy rates have increased in many countries
- \* middle class women have made educational gains but these have not been matched by an increase in suitable jobs
- \* the introduction of new technology has taken jobs away from women and impaired their health
- \* the current world economic crisis has affected women seriously by increasing their unemployment and cutting back on essential services.

This is shown by an evaluation of progress made during the first half of the Decade in implementing the Plan of Action. Ninety-three Governments answered an extremely detailed questionnaire sent to them by the United Nations covering every aspect of women's condition. This information was supplemented by information from UN organizations and from academic and research sources. A series of reports have been compiled on the basis of all this data which reviews the progress made in improving the situation of women in the areas of health, education, employment, political participation, national machinery and legislation, and national planning. The reports also list areas that need special attention during the second half of the Decade. These reports will be presented to the Conference and will form the basis for the programme of action for the second half of the Decade.

Starkly put, the situation of women in the world in 1980 is deteriorating. The triple goals of the Decade are not within reach. This is strikingly obvious in the present world economic profile of women :

While they represent 50% of the world population and one third of the official labour force,  
they perform for nearly two-thirds of all working hours  
receive only one-tenth of world income  
and own less than one percent of world property.

**374 *Her Story : An Anthology of Studies in Women's Problems***  
***If most Countries have Laws Guaranteeing Women Equal Rights,***  
***why have they not been Effective ?***

Laws guaranteeing women equal rights with men are essential but they are not sufficient on their own. They must be paralleled by adequate enforcement measures, otherwise they remain dead letters and promote lack of respect for the law. This is particularly true if the laws are ahead of social attitudes and values.

Equally important is women's ability to benefit from the laws. Widespread illiteracy makes it difficult to inform women of their rights, and their lack of economic independence means they may be unable to hire lawyers to take up their case. Furthermore, because social attitudes have not caught up with the laws, women may not be prepared to risk antagonistic community reactions by seeking legal redress.

One area where women in many countries do not have equal rights is in marriage. In most aspects of civil law unmarried women have equal rights with men, but many Governments reported that this was not the case for married women. For example : after marriage all property belongs to the husband, and the wife becomes a minor under the law.

A landmark in the history of women was made last year when the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted an International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women. This six-part 30 article Convention lists what Governments should do to eliminate discrimination in all areas of life : political and public, the right to nationality, education, employment, health, marriage and family. The rights of rural women are given special attention, as are the elimination of stereotypes and the suppression of prostitution. Its adoption was the result of five years of work by various bodies of the United Nations, but before it can come into effect it must be signed by 20 States. So far seven have done so. The Convention will be available for Governments to sign at the 1980 World Conference for Women. But even after

the Convention comes into effect, for its provisions to be of any use they must be implemented by Governments.

*As Countries Become More Developed Won't the Situation of Women Improve too ?*

Not necessarily. Recent research challenges the belief that the economic growth and development of a country are a sufficient condition for the advancement of women : that as a country progresses so will women.

Research has repeatedly shown that the beneficial effects of economic gains have not only been unevenly distributed among countries and social groups, but also unequally shared by men and women. Women are all too frequently "victims" of progress in the sense that new techniques, machines or technology have often made women's situation worse, not better. Researchers have singled out women's jobs as being particularly badly affected in this way. For example, the rapid expansion of manufacturing industries in some Asian countries has resulted in the exploitation of women for cheap labour. In agriculture too, economic progress has often had detrimental effects on women's jobs. A case study in Gambia, for example, shows that women's work in agriculture rose from 19 to 20 hours when "improved methods" were introduced, but men's work fell from 11 to 9 hours.

To make sure that economic progress does benefit everyone, women's needs and contributions, to the extent that they differ from those of men, must be recognized by planners, and women must be included in the planning process.

*Many Governments have Introduced Programmes for Women. Why have These had so Little Impact ?*

One reason is that Governments have tended to adopt a "welfare approach" towards improving the situation of women. Most programmes have viewed women as passive consumers and largely ignored their crucial economic role as active producers.

This has meant that women have been singled out as a dependent welfare group in much the same way as the aged and handicapped. And welfare programmes generally receive little money, few experts, and are the first to be cut back in times of economic difficulty. So programmes for women suffer a double jeopardy : not only are the funds assigned to them miniscule, but they are also isolated from government programmes on other issues.

Many governments, particularly those from developing countries, said lack of money and skilled people were serious obstacles not just for women's programmes but for all development projects. In other cases, lack of funds and resources seem to reflect the low priority governments give to issues relating to women.

#### *Why are Women Seen as a Welfare Group ?*

One reason is that women's contribution to society has been generally unseen and undervalued and their potential underutilized. For example, women in many developing countries are economically invisible despite the fact that they provide 60 to 80% of agricultural labour in Africa and Asia, and 40% in Latin America. In spite of the magnitude of this contribution, women earn from 60 to 40% less than men in most countries, developed and developing.

This inconsistency between the reality of women's situation and the lack of importance attached to their economic contribution has meant that national development plans often do not recognize the heavy responsibilities taken on by women. So women continue to be ignored and denied access to training, credit, financial resources and the like, in levels commensurate with their increasing responsibilities.

Furthermore, economic analysis overlooks the importance of the unpaid work performed by women. Work is generally defined as an activity for which one is paid, and because of this women's work in the home, in raising children and in food

production has been neglected or considered unimportant. Recent estimates, for example, show that the at-home unpaid work of women makes up 40% of the gross national product of the United States, but until recently this was not even considered an important factor in the productivity of a country.

But it goes beyond this. In many developing countries women produce the food required for the family or community while the men work in plantations, mines, or in jobs producing exports. Because the men's salaries are not sufficient to maintain the family, the women's unpaid work producing the food is not only necessary for family survival but it also subsidizes the men's commercial activities. And in the process it supports the whole country's economy : because male workers' families are supported by the women's food production, male wages can be kept low, allowing high profits and increased capital accumulation. This mutually reinforcing relationship between the paid work of men and unpaid work of women highlights the shortcomings in the definitions of "work" and the "labour force", neither of which take into account the crucial role of women.

*Why is the Economic Role of Women so Frequently Ignored ?*

Basically because attitudes have not kept pace with the reality of women's situation. A major obstacle to improving the status of women lies in public attitudes and values regarding women's role in society : women's place is still considered to be in the home and within a family, while men's is outside the home on the job.

A practical effect of these attitudes is the double workload it imposes on women who are employed outside the home. Because women are considered to be responsible for domestic duties the amount of time women spend on these tasks limits the amount of time and energy they can devote to activities outside the home. Studies have shown that employed women on average spend less time on paid work than men : they are often part-time workers, and they try to avoid overtime because of

their duties at home or because of legal restrictions. But the average working time of employed women is always greater than that of employed men. This is because the more time a woman spends on paid employment does not result in her spending less time on unpaid housework. It just means she has less leisure time. In all cases studied, the amount of leisure time of employed women was less than that of employed men.

Few countries have found ways to reduce the burden of work at home and to make men capable and willing to do their share. Generally, this has only happened in countries where public opinion is already prepared to accept that housework is not the sole responsibility of women.

The image of women as homemakers and childbearers, dependent on the economic support of husband and family, is becoming increasingly unreal. The facts show that between one quarter and one third of all households in the world are *de facto* headed by a woman who is the sole economic provider. It is true that women are homemakers and childbearers, but that does not tell the whole story. Women are also holding down jobs, struggling to raise families on their own, being economically independent. But the social and economic significance of this seems to have escaped notice.

### *How do you Change Attitudes ?*

One important way is through the media. Another is by education.

The mass communications media have enormous potential in helping eliminate stereotypes and prejudices about women. But at the present time the media tend to reinforce traditional attitudes, often showing women in a way that is degrading and humiliating and which fails to reflect the changing roles of the sexes. The typical image of women portrayed by the media is the traditional housewife or the amorous sex object, in either case depicting women as consumers. By disseminating such stereotypes, the media are perpetuating the inferior status of women.



Education is a crucial means of changing attitudes that discriminate against women, and also in equipping women to participate on an equal basis with men. Most countries have laws guaranteeing equal access to education yet the facts show that the education of women still lags behind men in many countries. The facts also show that in most parts of the world, women who have received equal education have not been able to use it in the same way and to the same extent as men in obtaining jobs, money and power, because men and women are not equal in the labour market.

In some societies girls' education is not considered important and is therefore neglected or even opposed. This means that many girls only complete the equivalent of two or three years schooling, which leaves them functionally illiterate. The facts speak for themselves : almost two out of every three illiterates in the world are female, and about 80% of all women in Africa and Asia cannot read or write. UNESCO has described the field of education as being one of "glaring inequality between men and women".

Many developing countries do not have compulsory primary education which is a minimum objective of the World Plan of Action. The cost of education is a serious problem both in terms of governments providing educational facilities and also for families paying for their children's books, etc.

In countries where jobs are limited, spending money on educating girls may seem inappropriate if not downright unnecessary. Education for boys is seen as a better investment because boys are more likely to get a better job, or any job at all. Education itself often tends to reinforce this view. Girls study household or domestic activities at school while boys are encouraged into academic subjects and vocational training that leads to paid jobs and careers. Since girls' education does not equip them to have a career outside the home, it fails to lead to the same sort of results as education for boys,

and therefore it tends to have less value and importance in the eyes of students, parents and teachers.

*Women live Longer than Men, So at least they have Equal or Better Health Care, Don't They ?*

No. It is true that in most countries women live longer than men, but it is also true that in some countries women have a higher death rate than men at certain ages. For example, a woman's chance of living through the years from 15 to 45 are lower than for men in many developing countries. This is because of increased risks associated with childbirth, which is one of the top causes of women's death in developing countries. Another period of greater risk for females in some countries, is the first five years of life. This is because of cultural attitudes which result in little boys receiving better care than little girls. When boys and girls receive the same care, the chances of girls surviving the first 5 years of life are 1% greater than for boys. Also women have a higher incidence of disease than men and suffer from specific health problems associated with their reproductive role and their heavy work burden, and which often go untreated. Women are also exposed to domestic violence, sexual exploitation and assault. Nutritional and environmental diseases such as anaemia, goitre, metabolic diseases and malnutrition have much more severe effects on women and can damage the foetus during pregnancy.

The World Health Organization reports that unless priority is given to women's health the goal which countries have committed themselves to achieving by the year 2000 of "the attainment of all citizens of the world of a level of health that will permit them to lead a socially and economically productive life", will not be met. This is not only because women make up half the population, but also because women's health is the key to the health of future generations.

The health care of women needs special attention, but apart from maternal and child health programmes, few countries

have programmes directed specifically towards women.

*Women are half the Population of the World. Why Aren't they more Influential in Getting Changes Made ?*

Women's participation in politics is essential to their advancement : without their voice being heard at the decision-making level, how will women get the changes they need in employment, health, education and access to supportive institutions and services ? On the other hand, without such changes, without equal access and opportunity, how are women going to get into power ?

Women's influence over political decisions and in drawing attention to their specific needs is extremely limited. Although women have equal political rights in most countries, so few women are in political jobs, they are almost token gestures. There are many obstacles preventing women from running for elected office ; some are the result of trying to break into what, until recently, has been the exclusive domain of men, and men trying to keep it that way.

Women must be educated and made aware of the need for them to be involved in politics. But it might be that women will only get equal political power if there is an overall change in the structure of society—the facts show that despite strategies adopted by governments, women continue to be subordinate in most countries. These strategies are all based on the assumption that society and its institutions can function in a sufficiently different manner to achieve the full equality of women. The fact that this has not happened suggests that something more is needed.

What is needed is not just piecemeal changes, a few laws here and there, a few more hospitals, schools and day-care centres, but a real transformation of society where the subordinate role of women is permanently changed to one of equality with men and full participation in all aspects of life.

In the final analysis, real change will only happen when governments take women's concerns seriously, and see women

not as parochial lobbyists whose concerns can be relegated to special bureaus and insignificant government ministries, but as a force which permeates every political decision taken nationally and internationally.

#### ACTION PROGRAMME FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

#### *How can the Situation of Women be Improved during the Second Half of the Decade ?*

Firstly, the World Plan of Action should be implemented by all Governments. The programme of action which will be adopted by the World Conference of Women in Copenhagen this July will update the strategies recommended in the Plan and highlight areas needing special action by Governments. These cover national development plans and policies, national machinery, legislation, political participation, international co-operation, the use of the media, data collection, and non-governmental organizations. Specifically, they included recommendations that women be given :

- a. equal rights of land ownership
  - b. equal access to credit and financing
  - c. access to day-care centres
  - d. special attention to their health needs and additional health services
- \* equal representation in all levels of government, in all institutions dealing with development, and in all delegations to international conferences.

Governments are also recommended to :

- a. repeal all discriminatory legislation
- b. legislate to guarantee women equal rights
- c. legislate to promote women's interests
- d. increase the numbers of women in elected and appointed public offices
- e. eliminate *de facto* discrimination such as in the selection of candidates for public office
- f. establish advisory bodies to monitor media programmes

- and to make recommendations on how to change the image of women portrayed by the media
- g. establish special training programmes to "sensitize" media people to the situation of women and to encourage them to portray women more accurately
  - h. oblige data collection agencies to give a sex and age breakdown on all relevant data
  - i. develop research techniques that reflect the economic and social roles of women
  - j. give priority to research on neglected groups of women such as workers in agriculture and from under-privileged sections of society.

A special section within the programme of action deals with the Conference subthemes : employment, health and education and two other priority areas needing special attention : food and rural women. It stresses the need for programmes to build the capabilities of women themselves to make full use of new opportunities.

In **employment**, there are 17 priority areas for action. These include recommendations that Governments :

- a. implement ILO conventions concerning equal rights for women in employment
- b. legislate to protect the reproductive function of women
- c. ensure equal treatment for migrant women workers
- d. redefine "worker" to that unpaid labour of women can be recognized in the gross national product
- e. develop urgently needed facilities in rural areas and urban slums such as adequate housing, safe water and day-care centres
- f. increase women's access to training programmes
- g. improve job opportunities for rural women
- h. provide protective labour legislation
- i. increase access for women to credit facilities, loans, etc.

The 15 priority areas for action in **health** include recommendations that Governments :

- a. establish primary health care as the main priority
- b. place special emphasis on meeting the health needs of women in rural and depressed urban areas
- c. involve women in the planning and execution of health care programmes
- d. develop family planning programmes
- e. utilize community health workers, traditional medical practioners, etc. and emphasize the need for health professionals to share the responsibility and decision making with women themselves
- f. legislate to control the packaging, labeling, preservation, etc. of commercially sold foods
- g. develop food and nutritional programmes based on women's needs
- h. promote positive traditional practices such as breast feeding
- i. improve hygiene, sanitation, access to safe water supply and shelter
- j. develop appropriate technology to relieve the workload of women.

In **education**, the 13 priority areas include recommendations that Governments:

- a. establish target dates for abolishing the difference in illiteracy rates and educational attainment between boys and girls
- b. make primary education free and compulsory, and establish co-education
- c. increase enrolments of girls in science and maths
- d. provide equal access to all levels of vocational training
- e. remove sex-bias and stereotyped portrayal of the role of females from all curricula
- f. train guidance counsellors and teachers to assist pupils to choose a profession based on personal capabilities rather than sex role stereotypes
- g. provide for non-formal education for women

- h. promote instruction and research on women, particularly at the higher educational levels and in teacher training.

Among the priorities aimed at improving the key role played by women in **food** production, Governments are recommended to :

- \* provide women with skills and appropriate technology to improve their role in agriculture
- \* ensure equal use of agricultural technology between men and women
- \* ensure women have equal access to credit, loans, etc.
- \* include women in agricultural policy-making
- \* ensure the equal participation of women in co-operatives.

Recommendations for Governments to improve the situation of **rural women** include :

- \* ensuring equal access for women to use land
- \* eliminating any discriminatory legal provisions
- \* creating facilities to lighten the work load of women
- \* researching ways to improve the situation of rural women and to increase their role in the community
- \* implementing literacy and training programmes
- \* improving job opportunities.

The international and regional section of the programme points out that the world is looking to the United Nations and its organizations to take more dynamic action in promoting women, both as beneficiaries and contributors, in all their projects.

A new approach should be taken by UN programmes which aims at increasing the productivity of women and improving their status. Specific recommendations include :

- \* introducing co-operatives aimed at developing self-reliance in basic services among women, particularly women from poorer sections of society
- \* introducing appropriate technology aimed at reducing the work load of women in the home, in food production and in child care

- \* reviewing all existing UN programmes to make sure they benefit women
- \* including women in the design, planning and implementation of projects
- \* involving men in programmes designed to change attitudes, particularly in the areas of health, education, rural development, and political participation.

Other recommendations for the UN include :

- \* women's issues should be considered at all international conferences, especially at the Special Session of the General Assembly on economic development, to be held in September this year
- \* more women should participate in international conferences
- \* regional commissions should compile lists of skilled women so that they can have more opportunities to be recruited for jobs
- \* a review of progress made in implementing the programme of action should be carried out every two years as part of the review of progress for the international development strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade (1981 to 1990).

#### SPECIAL TOPICS

##### *What Other Issues will the Conference Discuss ?*

The Conference is primarily concerned with the global situation of women, but there are specific groups of women whose situation needs special attention. These include women in southern Africa living under *apartheid*, Palestinian women and women refugees. Consequently, the Conference will also review the situation of these special groups of women and recommend measures of assistance for them.

##### *What is the Situation of Women in Southern Africa living under Apartheid ?*

The effect of *apartheid* and racism on the African people in



this region has been devastating for both men and women, but women have been hardest hit because they suffer a triple oppression based on their class, sex and race. Being women they are regarded as dependents and inferior to men; being black they are discriminated against by the racist *apartheid* legislation which controls every facet of their lives; and because of their race their class position is defined for the most part by the society they live in.

The creation of bantustans has had enormous effects on women. It has increased their work load tremendously: while the men are off working as migrant labourers, the women face an arduous existence trying to eke out enough from the land to feed their families. The total disruption of family life, where men are away for months or years at a time, is one of the cruelist aspects of *apartheid*.

Forced removal of over 2 million people to the resettlement camps is another inhuman expression of the *apartheid* policies, and once again it is women who have been hardest hit. Considered fundamentally non-productive, they make up the majority of those being expelled from the so-called "white" urban areas to the remote, undeveloped areas of the reserves.

*Apartheid* permeates, controls and distorts every aspect of the lives of African women, making it impossible for them to benefit from even the most basic programmes to improve their situation: it is clear that before women can play an equal role in their countries the system of *apartheid* must be abolished. In Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, women's struggle for equality with men has been made secondary to the wider more pressing struggle for national liberation. The role played by women in the liberation struggle is illustrated in the case of Zimbabwe, where women fought alongside men to achieve victory.

*What sort of Assistance can be given?*

The draft programme of action provides for assistance

to women victims of *apartheid*. These measures include :

- \* legal, humanitarian, moral and political assistance
- \* training programmes to equip women for leadership and support roles in national liberation movements and in the reconstruction of their countries after liberation
- \* dissemination of information about *apartheid* and racism and its effects on women in southern Africa
- \* programmes to develop income generating skills for refugee women

*What is the Situation of Palestinian Women ?*

Agenda item 10 of the Conference concerns the effects of Israeli occupation on Palestinian women inside and outside the occupied territories and includes a review of the social and economic needs of Palestinian women and special measures of assistance to them.

The report on the social and economic needs of Palestinian women relates the present situation of these women to the broader political and historical issues of the Palestinian problem : it points out that any discussion of their situation must start with a grasp of the "abnormal living conditions of the Palestinian people resulting from Zionist settlement in Palestine, be it through expatriation, occupation, or colonialization".

Palestinian women suffer from repression not only in their own society but also on the national level : in addition to their problems living in a patriarchal community, they also face persecution because of their nationality. Palestinians living in the occupied territories are subject to Israeli military and civil law which allows confiscation of Palestinian land. This has resulted in Palestinians being expelled from their homes and their farm land. Families have been split because of emigration, deportation or imprisonment, and women have often had to take on greater economic responsibilities because of the absence of husbands, fathers, sons, and brothers.

The dispersion, occupation and struggle for self-determi-

nation of the Palestinian people has meant that the overriding concerns for Palestinian women have been those of survival and national liberation, rather than of gaining equal rights with men.

Special measures of assistance are recommended for Palestinian women covering the areas of employment, education, family services and health care, legal aspects, the role of women's organizations, research and data collection, and the role of the media and culture.

*What about Women Refugees ?*

Women make up the majority of the adult refugee population in the world today, and in some countries 90% of the refugees are women and children. But it is not just because of their numerical majority that the needs of women refugees must be met. It is also because of their pivotal role in the family : the welfare of the refugee family depends on the ability of the woman to adjust to her new situation and to continue to function. Failure to assist her can have a disastrous effect on the whole family.

There are many problems that refugee women and men have in common, but women tend to suffer more from the loss of their roots and the radical change to their way of life when they become refugees. Women refugees are also particularly vulnerable. They suffer from sexual intimidation and exploitation, and the frequency of rape and prostitution indicate their need for special protection.

Because many refugee families are separated in the process of fleeing from their countries, women are frequently the sole head of the family and this places additional burdens on them. Women often find it difficult to adjust to their country of asylum and need special programmes and counselling to help them to adapt. They are often unable to take advantage of what limited opportunities may exist because of ignorance, lack of experience in asking for help, doubt as to whether anyone can help them, or lack of time because of their domestic and

child care responsibilities. They may not be used to being vocal, pushing themselves forward, and generally making themselves noticed by others.

Because of their particular vulnerability, women refugees need positive measures that favour them specifically, rather than a mere absence of discrimination. These measures should meet their special needs, encourage them to be self-reliant, and involve them in the working out of the solutions to their problems.

The inclusion of the item on women refugees on the Conference agenda has resulted in the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees undertaking a study on the special problems of these women so that specific programmes may be directed towards solving them.

A section on measures of assistance to women refugees is included in the draft programme of action. These include :

- \* legal, humanitarian, and moral assistance
- \* special relief measures for women and their children
- \* counselling services to enable women to become self-reliant in their country of asylum
- \* special health care, training, and educational programmes
- \* special efforts to reunite women separated from their families.

# **PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE UNITED NATION DECADE FOR WOMEN**

## **BACKGROUND AND FRAMEWORK**

### *Legislative mandates*

1. The mandates for the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women : Equality, Development and Peace are as follows :

a. General Assembly resolution 3520 (XXX) of 15 December 1975, in which the Assembly decided that in 1980, at the mid-point of the Decade, a world conference would be convened to review and evaluate progress made in implementing the recommendations of the World Conference of the International Women's Year, held in 1975 and to readjust programmes for the second half of the Decade in the light of new data and research ;

b. Economic and Social Council resolution 2062 (LXII) of 12 May 1977, in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to prepare for the consideration of the Commission on the Status of Women, at its twenty-eighth session, a report outlining a programme of concrete action for the second half of the United Nations Decade for Women : Equality, Development and Peace ;

c. General Assembly resolution 33/185 of 29 January 1979, in which the Assembly decided upon the subtheme, "Employment, Health and Education", for the World Conference and

recommended that the Conference should place emphasis on elaborating action-oriented plans for integrating women into the developmental process, particularly by promoting economic activities and employment opportunities on an equal footing with men, through, *inter alia*, the provision of adequate health and educational facilities ;

d. General Assembly resolution 33/191 of 29 January 1979 by which it was decided that the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women : Equality, Development and Peace would be held in Copenhagen.

*Objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women : Equality, Development and Peace*

2. In 1975, International Women's Year, a World Conference was held in Mexico City which adopted the World Plan of Action for the United Nations Decade for Women : Equality, Development and Peace, 1976-1985, and the Declaration on the Equality of Women and their Contribution to Development and Peace. The principles and objectives proclaimed at the Mexico City Conference for the Decade for Women : Equality, Development and Peace are still relevant today and constitute the basis of action for the Decade. They were further reaffirmed by a number of United Nations regional, sectoral and international meetings as well as by the social and economic recommendations of the Conference of Non-Aligned and Developing Countries on the Role of Women in Development held in Baghdad in May 1979, which were endorsed by the sixth summit of Heads of State and Government of Non-Aligned Countries.

3. Equality is here interpreted as meaning not only legal equality, the elimination of *de jure* discrimination, but also equality of rights, responsibilities and opportunities for the participation of women in development, both as beneficiaries and as active agents. The issue of inequality as it affects the vast majority of women of the world is closely related to the

problem of underdevelopment which exists mainly as a result of unjust international economic relations. The attainment of equality pre-supposes equality of access to resources and the power to participate equally and effectively in their allocation and in decision-making at various levels. Accordingly, it should be recognized that the attainment of equality by women long disadvantaged may demand compensatory activities to correct accumulated injustices. The joint responsibility of men and women for the welfare of the family in general and the care of their children in particular should be reaffirmed.

4. Development is here interpreted to mean total development, including development in the political, economic, social, cultural and other dimensions of human life as also the development of economic and other material resources and also the physical, moral, intellectual and cultural growth of the human person. The improvement of the status of women requires action at the national and local levels and within the family. It also requires a change in the attitude and roles of both men and women. Women's development should not only be viewed as an issue in social development but should be seen as an essential component in every dimension of development. To improve the status of women and their role in the process of development, such development should be an integral part of the global project for the establishment of a New International Economic Order based on equity, sovereign equality, interdependence, common interest and co-operation among all States.

5. Without peace and stability there can be no development. Peace is thus a prerequisite to development. Moreover, peace will not be lasting without development and the elimination of inequalities and discrimination at all levels. Equality of participation in the development of friendly relations and co-operation among States will contribute to the strengthening of peace, to the development of women themselves and to equality of rights at all levels and in all spheres of life, as well as to the

struggle to eliminate imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, zionism, racism, racial discrimination, *apartheid*, hegemonism and foreign occupation, domination and oppression as well as full respect for the dignity of the peoples and their right to self-determination and independence without foreign interference or intervention and to promote guarantees of fundamental freedoms and human rights.

*Nature and scope of the Programme of Action*

6. In compliance with the mandates given above, the present-Programme of Action has been drawn up for the second half of the Decade, 1980-1985, to promote the attainment of the three objectives of equality, development and peace, with special emphasis on the subtheme—namely, employment, health and education—as significant components of development, taking into account that human resources cannot achieve their full potential without integrated socio-economic development. The Programme aims at strengthening comprehensive and effective strategies to remove obstacles and constraints on women's full and equal participation in development, including actions to solve the problems of underdevelopment and of the socio-economic structure which places women in an inferior position and to increase their contribution to the strengthening of world peace.

7. The following Programme of Action, formulated at the mid point of the Decade, recognizes that considerable efforts have been made by the majority of countries in furtherance of the objectives of the Decade, but that progress has been insufficient to bring about the desired quantitative or qualitative improvements in the status of women. On the assumption that the three main objectives of the Decade—Equality, Development and Peace—are closely interlinked with one another, the purpose of this Programme of Action is to refine and strengthen practical measures for advancing the status of women, and to ensure that women's concerns are taken into account in the formulation and



implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade.

8. The present Programme focuses on ensuring women's increased participation in the realization of the objectives of the World Plan of Action. The recommendations seek to indicate the interrelated nature of actions that need to be taken simultaneously on several fronts such as those related to world economic issues for the International Development Strategies for the Third United Nations Development Decade and the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Establishment of the New International Economic Order thus elaborating the approach adopted in the World Plan of Action. In particular, the World Plan of Action gives high priority to improving the conditions of the most disadvantaged groups of women—especially the rural and urban poor and the vast group of women workers in the tertiary sector. This Programme gives high priority to improving the conditions of the most disadvantaged groups of women, particularly those disadvantaged because of socio-economic and historic conditions, with emphasis on rural and urban poor and on the subtheme : employment, education and health. An attempt has also been made to recommend practical measures to be incorporated in all aspects of the development of society.

9. Although the World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year already contains a comprehensive list of measures necessary to achieve those objectives, it is evident, and has been further borne out by the review of progress made over the past five years, that they cannot be achieved in such a short span of time and that periodic reviews are needed to strengthen the strategies and objectives of the Plan in line with major world developments. Therefore, the possibility of a second decade could be envisaged for the period 1985-1995. The recommendation to hold another conference in 1985 has already been made by two of the regional preparatory meetings—those of the Economic Commission for

Western Asia and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

#### HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

*The roots of inequality of women : the problems of development and equality of participation of women and men in development*

10. The causes of the inequality between women and men are directly linked with a complex historical process. The inequality also derives from political, economic, social and cultural factors. The form in which this inequality manifests itself, is as varied as the economic, social and cultural conditions of the world community.

11. Throughout history and in many societies women have been sharing similar experiences. One of the basic factors causing the unequal share of women in development relates to the division of labour between the sexes. This division of labour has been justified on the basis of the childbearing function of women, which is inherent in womanhood. Consequently, the distribution of tasks and responsibilities of women and men in society has mainly restricted women to the domestic sphere and has unduly burdened them. As a result, women have often been regarded and treated as inferior and unequal in their activities outside the domestic sphere and have suffered violations of their human rights. They have been given only limited access to resources and participation in all spheres of life, notably in decision-making, and in many instances institutionalized inequality in the status of women and men has also resulted.

12. The inequality of women in most countries stems to a very large extent from mass poverty and general backwardness of the majority of the world's population caused by underdevelopment which is a product of imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and also of unjust international economic relations. The unfavourable status of women is aggravated in many countries, developed and underdeveloped, by *de facto* discrimination on the grounds of sex.

13. It can be argued that the predominant economic analyses of labours and capital insufficiently trace the linkages between production systems in world economics and women's work as producers and reproducers ; nor is the subjection, exploitation, oppression and domination of women by men, sufficiently explained in history. Women are not simply discriminated against by the productive systems, but subject to the discrimination that arises by virtue of being the reproductive force.

14. While women's childbearing function and their traditional nurturing roles are respected, in many countries there has been little recognition of women's actual or potential contribution to economic activity. The role of women within the family, combined with a high level of unemployment and underemployment of the population in general, often results in priority being given to the employment of men in economic activities outside the family household.

15. These cumulative processes of discrimination within and outside the family characterize the dual oppression that women suffer on the basis of their sex and social class. Poverty and underdevelopment have sharpened and continue to sharpen these inequities.

16. The effects of these long-term cumulative processes of discrimination have been accentuated by under-development and are strikingly apparent in the present world profile of women : while they represent 50 per cent of the world adult population and one third of the official labour force, they perform nearly two thirds of all working hours, receive only one tenth of the world income and own less than 1 per cent of world property.

*Review of progress achieved in the first half of the Decade : lessons for the future*

17. The review and appraisal of progress achieved during the past five years indicates that the integration of women into development has been formally accepted by most Governments as a

desirable planning objective. Many countries have made significant efforts, undertaken a number of activities and measures and established institutional and administrative mechanisms to integrate women in development.

18. The accomplishments of the first half of the Decade include sensitizing planners and decision-makers to women's needs and problems, conducting research and building a data base on women, and promoting legislation safeguarding women's rights. However, with the general exception of the countries with advanced social services, serious problems, such as inadequate allocation of financial resources, lack of skilled personnel, and so on, continue to exist in many countries. This constraint is to a considerable extent—especially in developing countries—due to the general economic problems, such as scarcity of resources and/or under-utilization of existing resources. In many cases it reflects the priority Governments accord to issues concerning women. Another major constraint facing such mechanisms is their limited mandates. Thus, several existing mechanisms do not have strong executive and implementing authority. Similarly, the terms of reference given to such mechanisms tend to restrict them to welfare activities traditionally associated with women and thereby reinforcing stereotyping of women's roles and attitudinal prejudices. The sensitizing task of these special mechanisms has, as yet, insufficiently resulted in an actual integration into policy planning and implementation by Governments and international organizations of the question of sharing all responsibilities between the sexes.

19. The review of legislative enactments and provisions reveals that a significant number of Governments reported new constitutional and legislative provisions which guarantee or promote equal rights of women and men. However, legislative provisions are not always matched by adequate enforcement measures and machinery. In many countries specific measures have been taken to redress past discrimination and to promote equal

opportunities for women, especially in the fields of education and employment.

20. In the developed market-economy countries significant progress has been made in establishing national machineries, while achievements in the subtheme areas of education, health and employment are impressive. In many countries, new legislation has ensured the legal rights of women in social, economic and political aspects of national life. The percentage of women in positions of policy formulation has increased significantly. Women have joined the labour force in increasing numbers; enrolments have achieved parity in secondary, university and graduate education, in many nations, and expansion of primary health care has reached most rural areas of the various market-economy countries. Current studies on work of comparable value, occupational segregation and valuation of household work are positive signs of further progress in the second half of the Decade. Acknowledgement of the double burden has enabled women and men to move forward to challenge existing stereotypes and to develop social programmes aimed at effecting full equality of women and men.

21. In the developing countries, despite their resource constraints and the adverse effect of the world economic structure and the world economic situation, initiatives have been taken for integrating women into development, including the establishment of national machineries and legislative enactments and efforts to overcome prejudices against women. The economic contribution of rural women to agriculture and national development is increasingly being recognized in national and rural development plans and policies. Research and studies have been undertaken to identify the critical needs of women and to formulate and implement programmes and projects for them. In many developing countries efforts have been made in the public sector to increase the participation of women and representation at the decision-making levels. There has been an increase in the enrolment of girls in educational institutions

at different levels, an increase in the availability of health care to women and efforts have been made to improve the work conditions and the employment needs of women.

22. In the countries with centrally planned economies a further advancement of women took place in various fields. Women in those countries actively participated in social and economic development and in all other fields of public life of their countries, including the active struggle for peace, disarmament, detente and international co-operation. A high level of employment, health, education and political participation of women was achieved in countries with centrally planned economies, in which national mechanisms are already in existence with adequate financial allocations and sufficient skilled personnel.

23. Women in all countries love peace and women all over the world have conducted active struggles for peace, disarmament, detente and international co-operation against foreign aggression and all forms of foreign domination and hegemony. Women have played and can play an active role at the national and international level to strive for detente and to make it a continuing and universal process of an all-embracing scope so that the goals of the Decade might be achieved.

24. The review and appraisal of progress achieved during the past five years indicates that in many countries the situation of women in the so-called "backward" sectors has worsened. In particular, it has worsened with respect to the conditions of employment and education for women in the rural and the so-called marginal urban sectors. In many countries the actual number of female illiterates is increasing. In fact, illiteracy rates for the female population appear to have increased and are projected to increase in several countries. In terms of the percentage of enrolment that women constitute of the total enrolment, at the first, second and third levels of education, progress in the participation of women has been made in most countries ; however, declines have been reported by several in

female participation at the second level. It appears that, in many countries, only in the higher and middle socio-economic strata did women gain some significant increases in educational opportunities. However, this improvement has not been followed by a parallel increase in levels of employment, even in certain developed countries and in those developing countries with higher industrialization rates. In employment, there is evidence of increasing numbers of women being forced into unemployment or being transferred outside the formal sectors of the economy into the peripheral labour market in the developed countries and into the informal sectors of subsistence agriculture, handicrafts, and so on. This move from the formal to the informal market is evidenced by estimates of the International Labour Organisation and projections for over-all activity rates in the economies of the developing countries.

25. In many instances, transfer of inappropriate technology has worsened the employment and health conditions of women ; displacement of labour occurs ; and foreign models of consumption accompany such transfer. In certain large industries, some of them operated by transnational corporations, new discriminatory labour practices have appeared in both rural and urban areas, while in the urban areas increases in the employment of women have been largely the result of an increase in the exploitation of cheap, semi-skilled labour of young and unmarried women, related to increases in the migration of young women to the cities.

26. In many countries, women have not been integrated into national development plans. Where special programmes have existed, they have failed for the most part in achieving significant results, owing to their narrow focus on stereotyped sex roles which have further increased segregation based on sex.

27. Finally, the current world economic crisis has contributed to the worsening of the situation of women in general. Women's employment in industries which have high levels of female labour has been negatively affected by protectionist

measures. In developing countries the negative impact on women is even greater than in developed countries.

28. There have been some significant achievements in the implementation of a number of recommendations of the World Plan of Action both at the regional and at global levels in the first half of the Decade. Of particular significance was the establishment of the Voluntary Fund for the Decade for Women and the preparatory work leading to the establishment of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women. A joint interagency programme for the advancement of women was prepared and regional programmes were implemented in accordance with the regional plans of action adopted in Mexico. Several United Nations organizations were involved in these activities, including the United Nations, regional commissions, UNICEF, UNDP, UNCTAD, UNIDO, UNFPA, ILO, FAO, UNESCO and WHO. It is apparent that such programmes can be strengthened and that greater efforts could be made to introduce a more multidisciplinary approach in these programmes. In a number of conferences held under the auspices of the United Nations system, linkages were established between women's status and the priority areas of concern, including population, food, water, primary health care, education, rural development and agrarian reform employment, industrialization and over-all development.

29. The review of implementation of the objectives of the second United Nations Development Decade as well as of the progress of negotiations on the establishment of the New International Economic Order shows that hopes and expectations in connexion with the International Development strategy and establishment of the New International Economic Order have not been fulfilled. Instead of a gradual resolution of the world economic situation and encouragement of accelerated economic development of developing countries, the crisis in the world economy has become more acute. This has affected developing countries in particular and, because of the real



economic and social situation in these countries, it is women who are most adversely affected. The international development conditions have deteriorated and become an even more limiting factor for the development of developing countries, specially restricting the implementation of the objectives of the World Plan of Action.

30. The lessons for the future to be learnt from this review are many. First, it proves that any measures for women isolated from the major priorities, strategies and sectors of development cannot result in any substantial progress toward attaining the goals of the Decade. Second, legislative and developmental action, unless accompanied by positive and concerted action to change attitudes and prejudices, cannot be fully effective. Third, mere provision of equal rights, development services and opportunities will not, by themselves, help women to benefit from them without simultaneous special supportive measures, e.g. legal aid, earmarking of benefits, information and knowledge, institutional innovation etc.

31. The three main objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women—equality, development and peace—are closely interlinked with one another. Progress towards any one of these has a beneficial effect on the others. In turn, failure in one sphere has a negative impact on the others. Since the primary objective of development is to bring about a sustained improvement in the well-being of the individual and of society and to bestow benefits on all, development should be seen not only as a desirable goal in itself but also as a most important means of maintaining peace and of furthering equality of the sexes. However, the present world is by no means tranquil and there exist factors detrimental to peace. Women in some countries are still suffering from wars of aggression.

32. Thus, the universal strengthening of world peace and international security, struggle against foreign interference, aggression and military occupation, respect for national independence and sovereignty, the curbing of the arms race, the

achievement of the goals of general and complete disarmament and a reduction of military budgets, the achievement of detente, the establishment of the New International Economic Order and increased co-operation among States, on the basis of equality, will advance the economic, social and cultural development of countries and the situation of women, while still recognizing their special vulnerability. Consequently, it is only under conditions of peace that it is possible to move forward to the full implementation of the other two objectives of the Decade.

33. In accordance with their obligations under the Charter to maintain peace and security and to achieve international co-operation in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, bearing in mind, in this respect, the right to live in peace, States should help women to participate in promoting international co-operation for the sake of the preparation of societies for a life in peace.

34. Similarly, a close relation exists between the world economic situation, development and the strengthening of international peace and security, disarmament and a relaxation of international tension. It is imperative that resources released as a result of disarmament be used for promoting the well-being of all nations and contribute to bridging the gap between developed and developing countries, thus increasing favourable conditions for improving the situation of all members of society. In this context particular attention should be given to the advancement of women and the protection of mother and child.

35. The lack of progress in the establishment of the New International Economic Order has had a direct effect on the socio-economic situation of women. Recent studies on the impact of international economic problems on the employment and working conditions of women show that in fact the adverse effects on the wage levels and job stability of women are more extensive than on those of men. For example,

women are the first to lose their jobs on plantations that produce crops for export and in the textile, clothing and electronics industries, which are more sensitive to price fluctuations and to protectionist measures recently introduced by some developed countries.

36. The realization of all the aims mentioned above would provide new possibilities for a more intensive promotion of the status of women. An improvement in the status of women is of over-all national importance, and responsibility for this rests upon the State and all sectors of society. Such an improvement can be realized only if it is carried out in accordance with national needs and conditions, as a sovereign right of each country, without any country imposing its own model.

37. In the traditional and agricultural sectors, the effects of such factors, when associated with rapid displacement and changes in women's basic tertiary activities and a lack of appropriate compensatory measures and especially with the lack of corresponding efforts for the integrated development of rural areas and more intensive integration of women in such development, are even more detrimental. In other words, the lack of access to land, credit and financial and technological resources worsens the impact of rapid displacements in the work activities of women.

38. On the one hand, the recent expansion of capital—and technology-intensive and large-scale agricultural estates, often operated by transnational corporations, adversely affects women's work in basic tertiary activities, such as those related to small-scale urban, semi-rural and agricultural trade, which are crucial income generating activities and are essential for community self-reliance. Indeed, in many cases this process has actually jeopardized food production and the distribution of food and basic subsistence goods. On the other hand, in the modern sectors of developing economies, although the expansion of industries operated by transnational corporations has in certain cases increased employment opportunities for women,

it has nevertheless also brought new problems both for women and for over-all development. Care should be taken so that the redeployment of industry in the developing countries is not used as a means of providing a cheap labour force, especially women, or that the redeployment of obsolete and "dirty" industries is not carried out in the developing countries. Industrialization should be carried out in accordance with the over-all national aims, priorities and aspirations of the developing countries, as a part of a process which will contribute to the transfer of technology to the developing countries. Women's right to participate in and benefit from the industrialization process on equal terms with men must be secured.

39. In fact, there has been some concern about future trends in export oriented industries and their impact on employment in developing countries. Such industries are said to be more sensitive to the needs of the international market than to those of the host countries. Although important for creating employment and providing foreign exchange earnings, in other respects their impact on the domestic economy is minimal, since virtually all their input is imported and all their output exported. The Governments of host countries seem to view such enterprises, for the most part, as short-run solutions to the problem of generating employment, but for development in the long term Governments prefer industries that will engage highly skilled workers. If such long-term plans are actually realized, the employment of women in labour-intensive manufacturing might only be a temporary phase in the industrialization of developing countries.

40. As part of the industrialization and development process, activities of indigenous companies and corporations also have an impact on women and their employment options. Although, in some cases, cottage industries and other forms of small industry are replaced or absorbed by larger entities, these corporations often have a multiplier effect on female employment. Under some circumstances the employment options

of women are narrowed by corporate development, while in other instances women thus displaced are eventually absorbed into the newly established larger industries.

41. The processes described above demonstrate that, while traditions, customs and practices greatly hinder the advancement of women, some serious constraints to the economic participation of women in national development are international in nature and derive from the pattern of relationships between developing and developed countries.

42. In many countries, at the national level, a comparison of the performances of men and women in every sector of economic and social development shows that the wide gap between the economic opportunities available to men and those open to women has not been reduced in proportion to the increases achieved in over-all economic growth, regardless of the levels of development, which vary from country to country, the intensity of the world economic crisis increasingly affecting working people in general. Even in countries where significant increases in general wage employment were obtained, women have failed to share equally in this increase, while men, due to greater job security, have developed opportunities for sustained employment in the labour force, learned skills and increased their relative wages. Women constitute a substantial and growing proportion of the underemployed sector of the population, especially in the area of intermediary services and activities of the so-called tertiary and informal sectors. In those sectors women workers, like men workers, are often underpaid and receive for the most part extremely low wages; they are also subjected to a high degree of job instability and have, in most countries, no legislative protection, and existing labour organizations do not always pay sufficient attention to their needs and demands. Moreover, in most countries, new incentives designed to improve their commitment to the labour force, such as occupational mobility, education or training and infrastructure assistance in the areas of credit and finance, have been inadequate.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

*The need to include new data and strategies concerning the participation of women in development in the Third United Nations Development Decade*

43. The sharpening of the world economic crisis in many countries during the latter half of the Second United Nations Development Decade requires an in-depth reassessment of established strategies and imposes the need for undertaking additional and comprehensive measures, at national and international levels, with a view to the strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade. The shortfalls of the Second United Nations Development Decade have been linked to major problems related to external debts, insufficient increases in food production ( a factor that has also affected industrialization ) and inadequate levels and patterns of industrialization. Those failures were said to be further intensified by the low capacity of many countries, particularly developing countries, for absorbing their constantly increasing unemployment. Moreover, the major failures in productivity have been linked not only to key international factors but also to inadequate and/or non existent national policies aimed at maximizing the training and utilization of human resources. In this respect, the need for an in-depth reassessment of strategies concerning the mobilization of women ( approximately 50 per cent of the adult world population ) has been consistently emphasized in recent studies and policy-oriented analyses, particularly at the regional and local levels. The discussion of women's issues at a recent conference on an area of priority in the new international economic order—namely, the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development—has forged a new consensus and action proposals in this area.

44. These new developments are of particular relevance in overcoming the alarming shortfalls in the agricultural sector, where women constitute a large proportion of the labour

force. In order to promote integrated rural development, to improve productivity in the food and other agricultural commodity sectors, the wages, conditions of employment and training of women, as well as their access to credit, land and infrastructural technology in rural areas, should be significantly improved ; technologies adapted to the needs of rural areas should be developed and made accessible to women. Conditions where internal migration is the only possibility for employment could be eliminated by generating productive employment and development through more uniform geographical distribution of economic projects and social services. To this end, such adverse effects of technology transfer to rural women as may exist and such effects of migration as are adverse to women should be diminished.

45. The International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade should formulate goals, objectives and policy measures which would contribute to the solution of international economic problems and sustained global economic development, including the accelerated development of developing countries and the reduction of the existing gap between developing and developed countries. It is therefore necessary to expedite the establishment of the New International Economic Order. This goal cannot be achieved unless the inequality between men and women is eliminated. In the formulation and review of strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade, full consideration should be given to the conceptualization and review presented in the present Programme of Action as well as in the background documents before the World Conference. Furthermore, this new strategy should also include ways and means of developing new data that can more adequately measure the participation of women in the development process in every sector and at every level in order to provide a systematic and effective basis for the establishment of new national, regional and international policies to maximize and evaluate the utilization of the resources

of women and the involvement of women as equal participants in social life and economic development—this being a precondition for the successful development of each and every country.

*The interrelationship of the objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women and the subtheme of the World Conference : "Employment, Health and Education"*

46. The experience of the Decade has clearly revealed that the objectives of equality and peace cannot be realized without an unequivocal commitment at national, regional and global levels to women's integration in all aspects of development. The objective of development, which incorporates the principle of socio-economic and political equality, is closely related to stability and peace, which is more than an absence of violence within or between countries. In selecting the subtheme of the World Conference : employment, health and education, it was recognized that these interrelated aspects of development are of crucial concern to the advancement of women. The principles of the right of women to work, to receive equal pay for work of equal value, to be provided with equal opportunities for training and education were clearly stated in the World Plan of Action. It was also stressed that the full participation of women in development required that they should be given adequate and equitable access to health, nutrition and other social services including family planning and child care facilities. In all countries there is need for continuing attention to the implementation of these principles. For the remainder of the Decade, they should be given a high priority in Governments' planning and programmes. The level of development depends upon international conditions and national efforts towards integrated development particularly in the fields of employment, health and education, these being fields of exceptional significance for the under-developed sectors, of which women constitute the major segment. In fact, the sectors of employment,



health and education, especially for women workers in the agricultural and industrial sectors of the economy, offer a stark index of the levels and quality of development in any given country. As reproducers of the labour force, women's socio-economic and health conditions are crucial determinants of the prospects for development. Their employment and educational opportunities not only reflect the extent to which a given society offers women the possibility to develop their full potential and eliminates inequalities but also the extent to which countries are maximizing their endogenous technical and economic resources, especially in times of acute economic crisis which threaten world stability. The strengthening of regional commissions by adequate institutional arrangements which would also ensure intersectoral programming and co-ordination of activities for women is essential. The improvement of linkages among the organizations of the United Nations system with a view to co-ordinating implementation where there are separate programmes is also essential.

*National strategies for accelerating the full participation of women in economic and social development*

47. The improvement of the status of women requires action at the national, local and family levels. It also requires a change of men's and women's attitudes towards their roles and responsibilities in society. The joint responsibility of men and women for the welfare of the family in general and the care of their children in particular should be reaffirmed.

48. Governments should explicitly state their firm commitment to accord high priority to legislative and other measures for accelerating the equal and full participation of women in economic and social development with a view to eliminating the existing inequalities between men and women in all sectors.

49. National strategies should as a matter of urgency integrate women into their efforts towards the New International Economic Order and a new international development strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade by :

a. Studying and identifying new areas for national projects that would accelerate socio-economic growth and at the same time enhance the socio-economic participation of women by fostering economic and technical co-operation among countries ;

b. Providing advisory services for accelerating national self-reliance in co-operation with United Nations organizations ; also ensuring that women assist in determining that technology transfer has a positive impact on the socio-economic situation and health of women, as well as on their working conditions ;

c. Providing women in the most disadvantaged sectors of the population with the ways and means of increasing their access to infrastructure, basic services and appropriate technology in order to alleviate the heavy workload imposed by the basic requirements and demands of their families and communities, women should also be provided with opportunities to gain new skills and with job opportunities in the construction and maintenance of the above-mentioned services, as well as in other sectors ;

d. Adopting measures to make equal opportunities for development and services available to women in rural areas and to women in urban areas by reversing processes of unequal economic growth, implementing special investment and incentive programmes in disadvantaged sectors, controlling mechanisms for the transfer of resources from one sector to another and, where possible, preventing the rural sector from being impoverished to the advantage of the urban sector.

50. Governments should, where appropriate, design certain special transitional strategies and establish, compensatory mechanisms aimed at achieving equality of opportunity in education, employment and health as a means of overcoming existing inequalities in national administration, the educational system, employment, health services and the like, it being clearly understood that the special strategies are designed to correct imbalances and discrimination and will be phased out

when such imbalances and discrimination no longer exist.

*National development plans and policies*

51. Governments should undertake the following :

a. The establishment of qualitative and quantitative targets for the second half of the United Nations Decade for Women : Equality, Development and Peace ; projections for the planning cycles of 1985-1995 should be made where appropriate, and reviews conducted in 1985 and 1990. These should especially seek to remove the gap between the attainments of men and women, between rural and urban women and between all women in underprivileged population groups, and other women in all sectors and particularly in the fields of employment, health and education ;

b. Systematic and sustained linking of efforts to integrate women into national development planning and policies, particularly in the sectors of employment, education and health, and in the allocation of adequate material, technical and personnel resources within each sector of national development ;

c. The establishment of appropriate arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the extent to which women participate in and benefit from both general and sectoral development programmes. Reliable data should be collected and technical services provided for periodic reviews of the progress made at all levels of society in every major sector of the national development programmes ; targets should be established along with the allocation of physical and financial resources in every development programme, in order to ensure a more just distribution of benefits to women ;

d. The development and improvement of infrastructural technology, basic services and incentives, particularly for the rural sectors of the population and the urban poor ; women should be given equal rights of land ownership, equal access to credit and financing, basic sanitation, safe water and energy resources, and the skills to maintain and build community self-

reliance. Special attention and additional services should be given to women in the area of health ;

e. Initiate where necessary, as a result of socio-economic conditions, processes of integral agrarian reform, which will subsequently make it possible to implement measures for promoting the development of women in rural areas :

- i) To mobilize women, particularly poor women, in rural and urban areas ;
- ii) To organize learning and productive activity and access to needed developmental services and inputs (e.g., education, primary health and child care, skill development, credit and marketing facilities) ;
- iii) To organize women, including those in the unorganized sectors, for protection against exploitation, for socio-occupational mobility through education and training and necessary supportive services for children ;

f. Systematic efforts to promote and assist grass-roots level organizations as one of the instruments of development ;

g. The establishment of incentives and concrete programmes for increasing the participation of women in decision-making processes at all levels and in all spheres of national development ;

h. Wherever possible time-tables should be established for the achievement of particular objectives ;

i) Where appropriate, initiate consultations between government and employer and employee organizations as well as community groups to examine and improve conditions for women workers.

### *National machinery*

52. Where it does not exist, national machinery preferably at the highest level of government, where appropriate, should be established. By national machinery should be understood not only the establishment of central institutions at the national level but furthermore, where appropriate, the establishment

of a comprehensive network of extensions in the form of commissions, offices or posts at different levels, including the local administrative level because of its better capacity for dealing with specific local situations, as well as working units in the relevant branches of administration, in order to ensure the effective implementation of action programmes ensuring the equality of men and women with a view to :

a. Upgrading its capacity and role in national development plans ;

b. Achieving a more central location within the existing institutional arrangements for the formulation and planning of and strict compliance with policies and programmes and for monitoring their implementation and evaluation ;

c. Conceptualizing women's problems in an integrated manner within each sector of development and at the same time developing effective methodologies, policies and mechanisms for affirmative action, where appropriate, to ensure an integrated approach ;

d. Ensuring the full participation of women in measures taken by government or other agencies.

53. Effective institutional links between national machinery and national planning units as well as national women's organizations, should be established with a view to :

a. Increasing their decision-making powers ;

b. Increasing their technical, financial and personnel resources ;

c. Advising on new approaches to accelerate the full participation of women in every sector of the development process, according to national priorities ;

d. Drawing up national programmes for women in the priority areas of employment, health and education so as to make possible their full participation at the national level. These should also aim at intensifying over-all efforts to promote technical co-operation among countries and development in the areas of science and technology, water and energy

resources among others, in line with the strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade and the programme of action for the New International Economic Order.

54. Women should be represented on the basis of equality in all bodies and institutions dealing with development so as to be able to influence national policies at their inception—all this with a view to advancing the status of women and their participation in development.

55. The national machinery should increase the participation of grass-roots organizations, such as women's and youth associations, rural workers' organizations, community organizations, religious groups, neighbourhood associations, as well as trade unions, both in decision-making and in the implementation of projects and in this regard should serve as a liaison unit between appropriate government agencies and grass-roots organizations.

56. The national machinery should implement effective programmes aimed at ensuring that women participate in and benefit from the implementation, at the national, regional and international levels, of the relevant recommendations of such major conferences as the World Employment Conference, the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development, and the International Conference on Primary Health Care.

57. The national machinery should also provide appropriate channels of communication between women's organizations and other organizations, in order to :

a. Help women's groups to obtain financial and technical assistance from international and bilateral funding sources ;

b. Provide reliable data on the socio-economic and political participation of women to both governmental and non-governmental organizations, including those that act as formal and non-formal educational agencies, with a view to sensitizing society to the importance of the contribution to be made by

women to development and informing the public of the obstacles to equality of opportunity.

58. To ensure that the national machinery serves its purpose, it is advisable to carry out studies and interdisciplinary research on the actual status of women, drawing on the experience already acquired in some countries with women's studies programmes.

*Legislative measures*

59. All remaining discriminatory legislative provisions in the social, economic and political spheres and in penal and civil codes should be examined with a view to repealing all laws and regulations discriminating against women with regard to rights concerning nationality, inheritance, the ownership and control of property, the freedom of movement of married women, the custody of children and the like, or which inhibit their effective participation in or planning, implementation and evaluation of economic transactions.

60. Governments should develop programmes to inform women of their legal rights and should point out ways in which women can use these rights. Where appropriate, Governments should establish commissions to assess women's legal rights and the establishment of priorities for legislative measures and to identify, specify and classify the necessary legislative measures that have not yet been enacted.

61. In countries where large sections of the population are governed by customary law, Governments should carry out investigations into the degree of protection or oppression and amount of discrimination experienced by women under customary law, in order to deal with or reject such practices by statutory legislation at an appropriate time.

62. Governments should implement the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

63. Procedures should be provided—or, where they already

exist, strengthened—for effectively implementing social legislation, especially that affecting parents.

64. The protection of the social function of parenthood and of maternity should be guaranteed in legislation. Both in the public and in the private sector, the definition of maternity leave should be understood to be the period which is required by expectant mothers for the protection of their health before childbirth and by mothers for the recovery of their health after childbirth. Recognizing that the raising of children is a joint responsibility of parents and the community at large, efforts should be made to provide for parental leave, available to either parent.

65. Legislation should also be enacted and implemented in order to prevent domestic and sexual violence against women. All appropriate measures, including legislative ones, should be taken to allow victims to be fairly treated in all criminal procedures.

66. Educational and informational programmes on the socio-economic implications of laws should be launched among various professional groups, especially the legal and judicial professions, in order to prevent, where possible, the law from being applied inequitably.

67. Programmes of counselling and legal aid should be developed and implemented to enable women, especially those in the disadvantaged sectors, to have effective protection through legislation. Broad programmes to publicize legislation should also be implemented to make women and, in particular, those in the poorest sectors aware of their rights and obligations and of the institutional guarantees therefor.

68. The necessary steps should be taken to ratify or accede to all international instruments of the United Nations and its specialized agencies that deal with women's rights, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Those affecting the poor, such as those concerning the rights of rural and agricultural women workers, are particularly important.



*Participation in the political and other decision-making processes*

69. Every effort should be made to enact, before the end of the Decade, legislation guaranteeing women the right to vote, to be eligible for election or appointment to public office and to exercise public functions on equal terms with men, wherever such legislation does not already exist. In particular, political parties should be encouraged to nominate women candidates to positions that give them the possibility equally with men to be elected.

70. Governments and the organizations concerned should foster knowledge of civil and political rights, promote and encourage political organizations which carry out programmes involving the participation of women and implement broad programmes for the training of political officials.

71. Governments and political parties should, where appropriate, establish goals, strategies and time-tables and undertake special activities for increasing, by certain percentages, the number of women in elective and appointive public offices and public functions at all levels, in order that women should be equitably represented.

72. Special governmental instructions should be issued for achieving equitable representation of women in the different branches of Government and in departments at the national, state and local levels. Special activities should be undertaken to increase the recruitment, nomination and promotion of women, especially to decision-making and policy-making positions, by publicizing posts more widely, increasing upward mobility and so on, until equitable representation of women is achieved. Reports should be compiled periodically on the numbers of women in public service and the levels of responsibility in their areas of work.

73. Women should be equitably represented at all levels, especially the senior levels, in delegations to international bodies, conferences and committees dealing with political, economic

and legal questions, disarmament and other similar issues. Governments should encourage and support increased employment of women at all levels, technical and professional, in the Secretariat of the United Nations and its subsidiary organs and specialized agencies.

74. Where special qualifications for holding public office are required, they should apply to both sexes equally and should relate only to the expertise necessary for performing the specific functions of the office.

75. Special attention should be given to ensuring that formal or informal practices which result in *de facto* discrimination against women in the selection of candidates for political office or in their exclusion from formal decision-making, particularly in bodies such as public councils, boards or informal committees, should be eliminated.

*Participation of women in efforts to promote international co-operation and strengthen peace*

76. Women of the entire world should participate in the broadest way in the struggle to strengthen international peace and security, to broaden international co-operation and develop friendly relations among nations, to achieve detente in international relations and disarmament, to establish a new economic order in international relations, to promote guarantees of fundamental freedoms and human rights, and in the struggle against colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, *apartheid*, foreign domination, foreign oppression, foreign occupation. High priority should be given to providing training and educational opportunities at all levels. These might include university or college courses, lectures on international affairs, panel discussions, conferences, seminars and other educational activities.

77. Solidarity campaigns with women struggling against colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, racial discrimination and *apartheid* and for national independence and liberation should be

intensified ; such women should receive all possible assistance, including support from agencies of the United Nations system as well as other organizations.

78. The efforts of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to strengthen international peace and security should be intensified in every way. The active participation of women in the activities of such organizations should be supported. Exchanges between the national organizations of different countries in favour of international co-operation and the strengthening of peace should be promoted.

79. Intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations should examine more comprehensively the consequences of disarmament for social and economic development in general and for improving the status of women in particular. The results of such studies should be made available to as many women and men as possible and must be given practical effect.

80. In view of the importance of eliminating international inequities, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations should continue to study the impact of the activities of transnational corporations on the status of women and to make use of the results of such studies in practical programmes.

81. Governments should also be made aware of the results of such studies so that they realize and prevent the negative effects on the status of women which are caused by the activities of transnational corporations, as is the case in South Africa where transnational corporations sustain the system of *apartheid* by their investments.

82. Support should be provided by all women of the world in proclaiming solidarity with and support for the Palestinian women and people in their struggle for their fundamental rights. Moral and material assistance should be extended by the United Nations system to help Palestinian women. Specific programmes and projects should be carried out to fulfil that aim.

*Measures relating to education and the dissemination of information*

83. Independent organizations, including women's organizations at the national, regional and international levels, should study the ways in which the mass communications media, including the news media and advertising, treat the status of women and women's issues. Evidence that women are being treated in a sexist or demeaning way should be brought to the attention of the media concerned for correction.

84. Every effort should be made to encourage the fullest and most active participation of women at all levels of policy-making and decision-making within media organizations. Governments should use the opportunities they have by way of appointments to regulatory bodies and broadcasting networks to ensure that women are equally represented in senior decision-making.

85. Special efforts, for example, training programmes to sensitize media personnel at all levels, should be made to ensure that women are portrayed as persons in their own right and that the portrayal of women and women's issues reflects women's rights, needs and interests.

86. Educational programmes and campaigns using the media should be instituted in order to eliminate prejudices and traditional attitudes that limit the full participation of women in society. Such campaigns should also inform women and men of their rights and ways of exercising them. Women's organizations and other non-governmental organizations, political parties and trade unions should play an active role in the process of educating women politically in order to increase their capacities for participation in decision-making bodies. Special attention should be given to the role the media can play in reaching the migrant women. Women should also have access to training in the use of various forms of the media, in order to be able to present to as wide a public as possible their own perceptions of their needs, ideas and aspirations.

87. Governments should encourage the mass media to support

the increased involvement of women in efforts to strengthen international co-operation and peace and to broadcast programmes that make women more aware of the activities and positions of their Governments in vital questions of international affairs, thus enabling them to fulfil their roles in strengthening international peace and security and in opposing colonialism, racism, racial discrimination, foreign aggression and occupation and all forms of foreign domination.

88. Special campaigns should be undertaken to encourage the increased participation of women and girls in rural community and youth development programmes and in political activities.

89. The mass media should promote the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women : Equality, Development and Peace, as well as other international, regional and national programmes for women, so that the public is made aware of such programmes and thus participate to a greater extent in their implementation.

90. Bearing in mind the fact that one of the impediments to promoting the status of women lies in social attitudes and the evaluation of women in society, the mass media offer great possibilities as one means of promoting social change. They can help remove prejudices and stereotypes, accelerate the acceptance of the new role of women in society and promote their role as equal partners in the process of development.

91. In all fields of activity, the mass media should become one of the basic means in society of overcoming the contradiction in, on the one hand, the presentation of women as passive, inferior beings having no social significance and, on the other hand, an accurate picture of their increasing role and contribution of society at large. The mass media should also recognize that both parents have equal duties and responsibilities for the training and education of children and for household duties. Governments, as communicators, in preparing communications to or about their countries should ensure that the contents

reflect government commitment to status of women issues and concerns.

*Improvement of the data base*

92. All data-collecting agencies should give a sex and age breakdown of any information they gather, wherever relevant.

93. Some of the concepts and analytical tools of research, particularly those relating to economic processes—evaluation, labour, work, employment, social productivity, household, family and the like—should be re-examined so as to improve tools for the analysis and conceptualization of the economic and social roles of women within the home and outside.

94. Priority should be given to research concerning those groups of women that have been neglected in social research—namely, rural workers in agriculture and allied activities and working women in the underprivileged sectors of society. These are women who, far from being the dependants they have generally been assumed to be, have always had to perform multiple roles in order to ensure the survival of their families. For better evaluation of development programmes, access to and utilization of data need to be ensured.

95. National and regional indicators should be developed and improved for determining the degree to which women have actually been participating in development, as a means of measuring their actual contribution to the development process. A set of statistical indicators should be established by which progress towards equality between the sexes can be monitored. In establishing such a set of indicators, Governments will need to take into account the current state of their country's statistical development as well as their individual policy priorities. A system should be devised for placing a monetary value on unpaid work, in order to facilitate its reflection in the gross national product.

96. The level of economic growth in general and the sectoral structure of that growth should be established so as to

determine employment openings. Data on the composition of populations (e.g., age structure and the relation between rural and other sectors of a population) should be collected so that the need for employment openings, health services and education can be identified.

97. Current statistical operations and practices should be reviewed to ensure that they are free from sex-based stereotypes.

98. Where appropriate, permanent advisory committees to national statistical authorities should be established to improve the quantity and relevance of data pertaining to the situation of women, their participation in development and equality between the sexes. The work of such advisory committees may be supplemented from time to time by the organization of larger meetings of users and producers of statistics to address specific issues of mutual concern.

99. Research and testing of new or revised concepts and classifications should be designed or expanded to improve the usefulness and relevance of the statistics needed to describe the role and status of women, their participation in the development process and equality between the sexes. Such research and testing, whether carried out by the national statistical services or by university or other research groups, would need to involve both the users and producers of such statistics and would need to encompass both methods and procedures for data collection and those for the analysis and presentation of data.

#### *Role of non-governmental organizations*

100. There should be mutual co-operation between Governments and non-governmental organizations, women's and youth groups, employers and workers unions, voluntary agencies, community organizations, including religious groups, the mass communication media, political parties and the like, in implementing the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the Decade.

101. Governments should take account of the activities of non-governmental organizations and should support, where appropriate, the efforts of all relevant organizations, institutions and other associations concerned with the welfare and status of women.

102. Governments should recognize the importance of the role of women's organizations, encourage and assist them and provide them with financial and other assistance, particularly at the grass-roots level, to enable them to perform their functions which include activities such as :

a. The mass mobilization of women and, in particular, poor women in rural and urban areas ;

b. The provision of all development services and facilities (education, health and child care, expansion of credit and marketing capabilities and facilities, information on social, political and economic rights, etc.) ;

c. The establishment of organizations for women workers in non-trade-union occupations both in rural and urban areas as a means of protecting them against exploitation and providing the necessary auxiliary child care services.

103. With regard to the follow-up of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, Governments should :

a. Make possible the publication and dissemination of the results of the World Conference and of the Form of non-governmental organizations ;

b. Enable non-governmental groups to become involved in the realization of the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the Decade ;

c. Consider the role and resources of non-governmental groups in the implementation of international, regional and national plans for the improvement of the situation of women ;

d. Consider as a plan for the future, and establish strategies for their implementation, the input and particular recommendations of non-governmental groups ;

e. Give financial resources to non-governmental groups.



so that these groups can make a contribution towards the implementation of the Programme of Action.

104. Non-governmental organizations should support governmental efforts by :

- a. Investigating the problems of different groups of women ;
- b. Assisting and promoting organizations of women at the grass-roots level, especially those established among poor and uneducated women to promote learning and productive and other developmental activities ;
- c. Providing liaison services for such groups with educational and other development agencies ;
- d. Promoting attitudinal change among men and women ;
- e. Promoting solidarity among women's groups ;
- f. Influencing and informing the mass media and political groups ;
- g. Developing new analytical methodology ;
- h. Launching programmes and activities to serve, in particular, rural women ;
- i. Promoting public acceptance of family planning, including sex education ;
- j. Informing their members of government policies and development plans as well as of international standards and programmes for improving the situation of women.

*Grass-roots organizations*

105. In accordance with the regional plans of action and with a view to implementing the World Plan of Action, Governments and agencies on other levels should, where appropriate, promote the establishment of grass-roots organizations of women as an integral part of their over-all development efforts and should provide adequate financial and personnel resources for such efforts to succeed. Such grass-roots organizations of women will serve as forums for women to develop self-reliance and will eventually enable women to obtain real access to resources and power and to shoulder greater socio-economic and political

responsibilities within their communities and their societies.

*Objectives and priority areas for action taken in connexion with the subtheme of the World Conference, "Employment, health and education"*

106. The objectives and priority areas of action for improving the employment, health and education status of women in every country should be promoted within the over-all context of national planning and development for the whole population. Improvement in the condition of women in these areas is also instrumental in the development of the country. Furthermore, the improvements in any one of these sectors also affect the situation in other sectors. Recognition of this interrelated nature of the programmes is essential if their effectiveness is to be maximized. Socio-cultural values should not suffer as a result of physical economic development. Therefore, integrated and innovative programmes and new methodologies should be explored.

107. The programmes should also invariably include measures for building the capacities of women themselves by their training and information programmes and by their organizing themselves, with the assistance of Government and other socio-political forces, to make full use of new opportunities, policies and programmes.

108. Labour policies and action taken in favour of women workers should form part of over-all employment policies and measures for the entire working population, men and women alike, with a view to overcoming the problem that affect women only and preventing measures of protection which discriminate against them. Employment policies for underprivileged population groups, such as urban fringe groups, the low-income sector and indigenous population groups, should include references to the specific situation of women workers.

#### *Employment*

109. To promote full and equal opportunities and treatment

for women in employment, bearing in mind that this requires that both women and men have the possibility to combine paid work with household responsibilities and the caring for children. To ensure that women and men receive equal remuneration for work of equal value and equal educational and training opportunities in both rural and urban areas, so that women may obtain more highly skilled employment and become integrated into the development of their countries with a view to more rapid and balanced growth in agriculture, industry and other non-traditional sectors, with the aim of ensuring better over-all working conditions for women, achieving more rapid and balanced growth in both agriculture and industry and integrating women in development.

110. To increase and promote employment opportunities for women as part of national efforts to bring about a more just international economic order, with a view to achieving national self-reliance, increasing economic and technical co-operation among developing countries and the full utilization of the labour force for their own benefit and promoting the socio-economic development of their own countries.

111. To improve the working conditions and occupational mobility of women workers in the lower and middle levels of the sectors in which the majority of women work.

112. To ensure equal rights and opportunities for the gainful employment of rural women both in agricultural and non-agricultural jobs under proper working conditions, improve the capabilities and productivity of rural women workers, increase food production, diminish migration in countries where this is necessary and whose population policies contain explicit provisions to this effect, promote rural development and strengthening of self-reliance programmes ; to extend labour and social security legislation to women working in agriculture.

113. To promote effective policies for increasing employment opportunities, to improve existing ones and enable women to obtain jobs involving more skills and responsibility, particularly

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at the managerial level, in all sectors of the economy, to promote occupational mobility for women, in both rural and urban areas, by encouraging the provision of maternity protection, child-care facilities, technical training and health protection, with a view to achieving the industrialization targets for the third United Nations Development Decade.

114. To facilitate paid employment of women by encouraging increased involvement of males in sharing domestic and child care responsibilities.

115. To take measures for the implementation of legislation relating to working conditions for women.

116. To formulate and implement national and local training and employment programmes and projects which take particular account of the need to give women access to gainful economic activity and to improve their employment situation in priority areas for the economic and social development of their countries.

117. To adopt measures for ensuring that women's entry into certain sectors of the labour market does not result in lowering the working conditions, remuneration and status of those sectors.

118. To promote technology that will improve the labour productivity of women while decreasing their work time and to guarantee that women workers are the ones who benefit from such an improvement.

119. To review implicit and explicit job evaluation with a view to overcoming difficulties and obstacles to the job advancement and careers of women.

120. To ensure that, in all sectors, the economic returns from women's work accrue directly to them.

*Priority areas for action*

121. Special action should be taken to institute programmes which would inform women workers of their rights under legislation and other remedial measures. The importance of

freedom of association and the protection of the right to organize should be emphasized, this being particularly relevant to the position of women in employment. Special measures should be taken to ratify and implement in national legislation the relevant conventions and recommendations of the International Labour Organisation concerning the rights of women as regards access to equal employment opportunities, equal pay for work of equal value, working conditions, job security and maternity protection.

122. Information programming should be instituted aimed at making women, especially those in the rural areas and in socio-economically disadvantaged groups, aware of employment opportunities and of the opportunities for education, training and skill acquisition.

123. Measures should be taken to ensure that development agencies in different sectors of national planning include larger numbers of women in their staff as a matter of policy and, as part of that policy, allocate resources to programmes for women's employment and training, the provision of supporting services and other essential inputs.

124. Legislative and/or other measures should be adopted and implemented which guarantee women protection against any sexually-oriented practice that endangers a women's access to or maintenance of employment, that undermines her job performance and thus threatens her economic livelihood.

125. Legislative and/or other measures should be adopted and implemented to secure for men and women the same right to work and to unemployment benefits, as well as to prohibit, through *inter alia* the imposition of sanctions, dismissal on the grounds of pregnancy or of maternity leave and discrimination in dismissals on the basis of marital status. Legislative and other measures should be adopted and implemented to facilitate the return to the labour market of women who have left it for family reasons and to guarantee the right of women to return to work after maternity leave.

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126. Measures should be taken to ensure on a basis of equality of men and women the right to protection of health and to safety in working conditions, including the safeguarding of the function of reproduction. Special protection should be provided to women during pregnancy in types of work proved to be harmful to them.

127. Measures should be taken to ensure that migrant workers enjoy equal treatment and access to vocational training as nationals of the host country, and to improve the status of women who, in the process of migration, accompany the migrant workers as members of their family.

128. Ways should be investigated in which the unpaid work in the household and in agricultural tasks which women and men perform can be recognized and reflected in official statistical data collections.

129. Urgently needed infrastructure services should be developed and provided, such as adequate housing, safe water, energy and child care centres, for families and poor communities in rural areas and urban slums, in order to alleviate the workload traditionally imposed on women in their performance of tasks essential for the survival of their communities; and to increase their levels of gainful employment and productivity, it being understood that the benefits of higher productivity should accrue to women workers and their families.

130. Where appropriate, flexible formal or informal training programmes should be designed and implemented for women in non-traditional areas in order to widen their employment opportunities and to enable them to generate income through the production of goods and services.

131. The access of women to special technical training programmes should be increased and women so qualified should be helped to obtain jobs suited to their individual skills ; legislative measures should be enacted and appropriate legal assistance provided to prevent exploitation based on sex, race, age, marital status or motherhood in both the traditional and modern

sectors. In addition, measures should be taken to ensure that women are introduced, on the same footing as men, to new types of training in the advanced technologies which are now being widely developed.

132. Measures should be taken to provide for part-time workers levels of remuneration and social security benefits which are proportional to those of full-time workers, and the same levels of working conditions and standards of protection.

133. Where necessary, measures should be taken to develop and/or accelerate much-needed changes in policies in the tertiary sector, which includes the informal subsectors of small-scale trading, domestic services and the like in both urban and rural areas, especially by (a) extending the coverage of labour legislation, in particular for domestic services workers; (b) guaranteeing the right to organize trade unions and other appropriate organizations, such as credit and marketing co-operatives controlled by the women concerned; and (c) increasing access to managerial and technical training and to financial resources, credit facilities and other inputs in order to improve the working conditions of women and increase their occupational and educational mobility as well as their productivity and economic returns.

134. Measures should be adopted which guarantee that, when transfers of technology take place, account is taken of the factors of production available in the country to which the transfers are made in order to avoid any labour force disruptions, which usually affect women more severely. Research should be promoted on appropriate endogenous technology which takes account of national characteristics and, in particular, those of developing countries. New programmes and appropriate policies should be developed concerning industrialization and the transfer of technology aimed at maximizing benefits and preventing adverse effects from the transfer of technology on both the employment, training, health and nutrition of women and over-all development. Standards should be instituted to

ensure that technologies transferred are safe for utilization and recipient countries are alerted to the hazards of particular forms of technology.

135. Studies should be carried out on the policies, programmes of action and expanding operations of transnational corporations to ensure that they offer greater employment opportunities for women and to prevent their negative effects.

136. The access of women workers to recreation and culture should be increased since their double workload prevents them from having enough necessary free time ; it is therefore essential that household chores and family care should be shared by men, and special emphasis should be placed on the obligation of couples to share household tasks with a view to facilitating the access of women to gainful employment.

137. Measures should be taken to ensure that in economic recessions the employment market is not less accessible to women than to men. Measures taken under social legislation concerning unemployment should not directly or indirectly lead to inequality between women and men. Retraining facilities should be provided for unemployed women, preferably in growth sectors.

138. To ensure that women and men are able to harmonize their occupational activities with their family life, child-care facilities and amenities for adolescents should be provided, the length of the working day reduced, and flexible working hours introduced.

139. The number of women at the decision making level in both national and international workers' organizations and advisory bodies should be increased at least until the proportion corresponds to the number of women carrying on an occupation.

140. Equal employment opportunity programmes should be developed to promote the access of women to all levels of management and decision-making positions and effective programmes should be devised that will promote the access of women and girls to non-traditional skilled trades.



***Health***

141. To improve the physical and mental health of all members of society through :

- a. An improvement in the health status of girls and women, as a necessary aspect of over-all economic development ;
- b. The formulation of demographic policies ;
- c. An improvement in health care for women throughout their life cycles ;
- d. The increased participation of women and men, not only as beneficiaries of the promotion of health but also in the formulation and implementation of policy decisions regarding health at community and national levels ;
- e. Studies of the causes of diseases, the establishment of clinical and epidemiological research programmes and the organization of services to deal with national problems ;
- f. The development of policies and programmes aimed at the elimination of all forms of violence against women and children and the protection of women of all ages from the physical and mental abuse resulting from domestic violence, sexual assault, sexual exploitation and any other form of abuses ;
- g. Training human resources for health programmes of the required quantity and quality ;
- h. The inclusion of the mental health aspect, as well as programmes for curbing the abuse of alcohol and drugs, in over-all health programmes of women.

***Priority areas for action***

142. Promote primary health care with the participation of the communities as the overriding health priority and as a fundamental vehicle for achieving the health goals and objectives of the World Plan of Action.

143. Give high priority to meeting the health needs of women within primary health care, with particular attention to the special needs of women in rural and depressed urban areas and

monitor health programmes in order to secure that women's health needs are properly met.

144. Formulate official policies to involve women in the planning and execution of health programmes at all levels, particularly to increase the participation of women at decision-making levels.

145. Ensure accessibility for all women to maternal health care (including care during pregnancy and childbirth and post-natal care), nutrition (including measures to control nutritional anaemias), family planning, prevention and treatment of infectious diseases—including sexually transmitted and non-communicable diseases—and parasitic diseases, through the establishment of a comprehensive family health, nutrition, and health education network, in order to give women better access to health care.

146. Develop, implement and strengthen child welfare and family planning programmes and family planning information for inclusion also in school curricula for girls and boys on safe and acceptable fertility regulation methods so that both men and women can take the responsibility for family planning, to promote the health, safety and welfare of mother and infants and to enable women to exercise the right to decide freely and responsibly for the number and spacing of their children. Family planning should be facilitated as one means of reducing maternal and infant mortality where high risk factors prevail, such as high parity, too frequent pregnancies, pregnancies at the extremes of the reproductive age, and the frequency and danger of secretly performed abortions.

147. To promote the physical and mental well-being of women, provision should be made for additional research over the next few years to facilitate analysis and assessment of the status of women.

148. Develop programmes to improve the training and utilization of community health workers, especially women, traditional medical practitioners and birth attendants and elderly village

women ; support women in their contribution to primary health care both within the family and the community, particularly with reference to self-care and self reliance in health.

149. Draw the attention of doctors and other health professionals to the health needs of women in general, not only in relation to pregnancy and childbirth ; emphasize preventive medicine and the need to share responsibility and decision-making with professionals in other disciplines and with women themselves.

150. Establish official incentive policies to give women greater access to training in the medical professions and in health-related research in accordance with local and national needs.

151. Develop simple economic, social and cultural indicators in order to obtain better data on trends in morbidity and mortality among women and their access to and utilization of health services. Establish a national basic health information system to provide up-to-date and reliable indicators of prevailing conditions, future trends and resource productivity.

152. Give high priority to the formulation and implementation of food and nutrition policies based on the needs of women, particularly pregnant and lactating women, and those of women and children of lower socio-economic status in both rural and depressed urban areas ; establish educational programmes through vocational schools and community agencies to improve the quality, availability, preparation, preservation, rational use of and distribution of food, especially locally grown food.

153. Protect the health and safety of women and their families from contamination, spoilage and adulteration of foods, harmful additives and preservatives, mislabelling, deceptive packaging and irresponsible promotion of foods of low nutritional value and of breast milk substitutes. High priority should be given to the enactment and enforcement of comprehensive legislation, where appropriate, and the creation of appropriate standards of safety, health, product information and quality, including standards for the preparation, preservation,

packaging and labelling of foods and other products sold in the markets. Women and men should be instructed as to the right and hygienic use of such products. Information as to the right to such protection should be widely disseminated through schools, the media, and village and community organizations.

154. Develop explicit programmes at national and local levels to improve hygiene, sanitation and access to safe water supplies and shelter as fundamental bases for good health.

155. Develop policies to ensure a safe working environment both in home and in the work place and provide appropriate technology to relieve the workload of women. Carry out specific studies on labour hygiene and safety, particularly in branches of activity in which the health of women might be affected.

156. Introduce legislation aimed at eliminating occupational health hazards likely to affect reproductive functions, reducing environmental pollution, and controlling disposal of toxic chemicals and radioactive waste.

157. Promote extensive health education programmes, including special efforts to encourage positive traditional practices, especially breastfeeding, and to combat negative practices detrimental to women's health.

158. Formulate specific programmes for the prevention of maternal and infant mortality, giving priority to depressed rural and urban areas and to most vulnerable population groups.

159. Encourage the formulation and implementation of social support measures such as maternity and parental leave, child care, breastfeeding breaks etc. to enable women and men to carry out parental roles in the optimal and healthiest manner.

160. Direct special attention to the needs of elderly women, women living alone and disabled women.

161. Establish programmes giving full medical attention to adolescent women, since adolescence is a critical time in women's biological and psychological development and also involves a change in their relationship to the social environment in which they live.

162. Prevent mutilation practices which damage women's bodies and health.

163. Promote research into the extent and the causes of domestic violence with a view to eliminating it ; take measures to eliminate glorification of violence against and sexual exploitation of women in the mass media, literature and advertising ; provide effective help for women and children who are victims of violence, e.g. by the establishment of centres for treatment, shelter and counselling victims of violence and sexual assault.

164. Formulate a plan of action for the protection of women against abuse of alcohol, tobacco and drugs and also excessive use of certain medicaments, principally by informing them of the hazards these substances present for them and their children.

*Education and training*

165. To provide equal access to educational and training opportunities at all levels of all types for girls and women in all sectors of society, thus enabling them fully to develop their personalities and to participate on an equal footing with men in furthering the socio-economic aims of national planning and to achieve self-reliance, family well-being and improve the quality of life.

166. To contribute to a change in attitudes by abolishing traditional stereotypes of men's and women's roles and stimulating the creation of new and more positive images of women's participation in the family, the labour market and in social and public life.

167. To take into consideration in educational programmes and methodologies the special perspective of education for non-violence, mainly with regard to relationships between women and men.

168. Include in educational programmes and methodologies a special emphasis on education against violence, particularly violence in relationships between women and men.

169. To provide for women and girls innovative programmes and methodologies which stimulate creative development, promote the right to freedom and develop the ability to communicate through the eradication of illiteracy, while at the same time upgrading functional skills and basic information about employment and health-related matters as well as their political, economic and social rights.

170. To establish transitional links between school life, apprenticeship and working life, whenever possible, in order to ensure for women and girls better interaction between education, training and employment.

171. Formulate and implement education programmes with final-year courses adapted to the specific needs of the economic and social development of the country, designed to improve and increase the access of women to gainful employment and give them opportunities to take part in non traditional activities.

172. To increase the opportunities and facilities which promote participation of women in science and technology through education and training in these fields.

173. To devise means of encouraging girls to stay at school longer and to ensure that courses chosen by girls are in a range of fields including the professions, management, economics and the sciences which will enable them to achieve positions of influence in the decision-making process.

*Priority areas for action*

174. Education, specifically literacy, being a key to national development and a major requisite for improving the status of women, efforts should be made to establish targets for the abolition of differentials in the literacy and educational attainment rates for girls and boys within over-all national efforts to increase literacy and education for the whole population.

175. National educational accreditation and equivalency programmes should be designed to encourage the return of women and girls who have dropped out into the formal education system.

176. Promote education programmes for children, particularly those of pre-school age, as well as young people, aimed at strengthening women's contribution to society and at changing the traditional roles assigned by social and cultural norms to women and men.

177. Establish targets for the expansion of educational opportunities and facilities for women, including courses and institutions with adequate personnel and materials, for which resources have been earmarked.

178. Provide new formal and extracurricular education to enable women to combine their household duties with the opportunity to improve their educational level.

179. Encourage, through legislation, free and compulsory education for girls and boys at the primary level, with the provision of assistance to establish co-education when possible. Provide trained teachers of both sexes and, if necessary transportation and boarding facilities.

180. Increase the enrolment of female students in education courses and, in particular, in science, mathematics and technical courses, and in management training courses in the areas of science and technology, especially by encouraging them to enrol in such courses

181. Provide for equal access to all levels of general education, vocational education, and training for all types of occupations, including those traditionally accessible to men, and to new training schemes and other facilities such as on-the-job training, scholarships, inexpensive boarding and lodging facilities and accessible child care arrangements, ensuring equal job opportunities after completion of vocational education or training for both entry and re-entry, after a period of absence into occupational activities.

182. Examine curricula and learning materials with a view to removing sex-bias and the stereotyped portrayal of the roles of girls and promote the development of non-sexist resources and curricular materials.

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183. Establish targets for the nation-wide implementation of the learning materials developed to optimize the potential of women for countries which have started the work since 1975.

184. Include courses on women's issues in university degree programmes.

185. Develop programmes at the secondary, tertiary and adult education levels to encourage a basic understanding of human rights, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other relevant instruments. Such courses should stress the fundamental importance of the elimination of discrimination on the basis of race and sex.

186. Train guidance counselors and teachers to assist girls and boys in choosing occupations according to their personal capacities and not according to stereotyped sex roles.

187. Design and promote teacher training courses to alert teachers to the stereotyped assumptions which inhibit choice in school subjects and to the need to widen the options available to women and girls in their future training and occupational choices. Provide, whenever possible, counseling services for the benefit of parents, teachers and pupils as well as for workers and employers.

188. Encourage parity of men and women in teaching and administrative positions at all levels of education.

189. Identify the situational constraints on different culturally or socially underprivileged target groups (e.g. girls of school age who are not attending school, illiterate adults or adults who are engaged in home responsibilities and need additional or diversified education, working women of different age groups in rural and urban areas, mature women and immigrant women) and formulate and implement programmes for such groups.

190. Monitor programmes and take measures for improving the data on drop-out rates of girls and women and their causes, and on course content and levels of skills acquired, in order to facilitate the introduction of remedial or accelerated measures



and to generate greater commitment to the policy objectives within the system.

191. Where appropriate, provide for particular target groups, giving priority to those needing them most, counseling and supportive services and certain necessities (child care, earning and learning schemes, transport, clothing, books, supplementary nutrition, reading centres, special tuition in basic subjects such as mathematics, scholarships and stipends and the like), on the basis of situational analyses, and include resources for such services as priority items in educational budgets.

192. Provide for education for women in the context of life-long education in all major development sectors, in developed and developing countries, and take specific measures for obtaining the necessary funds and personnel.

193. Promote instruction and interdisciplinary research on women and the implications of the goals of the Decade as an input to the educational process, particularly in institutions of higher and teacher education, in order to draw on the experience acquired in some countries with women's status and to eliminate all attitudinal and conceptual biases and prejudices, especially those relating to class, that hinder understanding of the role and situation of women.

194. Urge Governments to encourage women to enrol in all their technical institutes and to promote, through every means available to them, the establishment of intermediate technical courses.

*Priority areas requiring special attention*

*Food*

195. To enhance and stimulate the key role performed by women in all phases of the process of food production and their contribution to the economic and social process of food production and their contribution to the economic and social development of their countries, at the same time raising their status.

196. To ensure proper planning of the agricultural production

sector so that the agricultural output covers as a matter of priority the supply of products that are socially and nationally necessary for the nutrition and food requirements of women in rural areas.

*Priority areas for action*

197. Governments should adopt the necessary measures to :

a. Promote the incorporation of women in all phases of the agricultural productive process, including post-harvesting processing, up to and including the marketing of products ;

b. Provide women with the necessary skills and appropriate technology to enable them to participate better in the process of subsistence food production ;

c. Establish a link between food production and food consumption processes by providing information on the nutrients required for the development of the population and in particular of children and by making rural women aware of the need for proper nourishment. Eliminate inappropriate consumption patterns which have developed as a result of ignorance or manipulation by commercial advertising ;

d. Promote the participation of women, especially in rural areas, in agricultural policy-making, leading to the production of basic foods for family and national consumption ;

e. Ensure access to and use of appropriate technological model of agricultural production for both sexes without distinction ;

f. Stimulate the participation and full voting rights of women in co-operatives and other forms of organization relating to the production, processing, distribution, marketing and consumption of basic food products ;

g. Ensure access for women in conditions of equality with men to financing mechanisms covering all phases of production, up to and including the marketing of food products ;

h. Support forms of marketing of basic foods for family consumption which will be conducive to the opening

up of priority markets for the sale of their products.

*Rural women*

198. Enhance the effective contribution of rural women to the economic and social development of their countries in cases where they are hampered by their inadequate access to appropriate technology, by the inadequate social infrastructures in rural areas and by the double workload they bear through their participation in working the land and their performance of household duties.

199. Improve the living conditions of women in rural areas, and to this end :

a. Acknowledge the contribution which women make to the economic and social development of their countries, and take steps to ensure that rural women participate equally and effectively in the development process as beneficiaries and as agents for change by affording them participation as policy-makers, organizers and implementers of development programmes ;

b. Give rural women at all levels access to formal and non-formal courses in leadership and decision-making, as well as to programmes that teach skills appropriate to their lifestyle and skills which could be utilized, if necessary, for paid employment ;

c. Provide rural women with basic human needs, including clean water supplies, effective sanitation, adequate food and nutrition, basic health services, shelter and appropriate fuel supplies. They should have access to formal and non-formal education programmes, which should be available at minimum cost and inconvenience to already overburdened women. They should also have assured access to technology at all levels, particularly in relation to food storage and preservation, transport and marketing and labour-saving tools and devices ;

d. Provide rural women with access to improved transport and communication systems, and to all forms of media ;

e. Extend to all rural women free and equal access to credit facilities where these are available ;

f. Aid donor countries and recipient Governments should consult on ways of developing programmes at the village level for involving local women in their planning and implementation. Care should be taken to ensure that development assistance programmes do not exclude women from technological training.

*Priority areas for action*

200. Governments should adopt the necessary measures to :

a. Eliminate from legislation on rural development, where necessary, provisions that discriminate against women ;

b. Make rural women aware of their rights so that they can exercise and benefit from them ;

c. Ensure access for rural women to the use, enjoyment and development of land, in conditions of equality with men, by according to women the same practical and legal rights as those of men in access to ownership and the use and management of land, in the production of goods from land by means of agriculture or grazing and in the disposal of any such products or of the land itself ;

d. Allocate sufficient financial resources to carry out research, especially field research, which will provide a sound basis for initiating, expanding and strengthening concrete and integrated actions aimed at promoting the development of rural women and their integration in economic and social activity in rural areas ;

e. Examine carefully the possibility of devising statistics which measure rural women's contribution on an equal basis with men's, including labour in the sphere of agricultural production, unpaid family labour and food production for family consumption, as well as monitor the impact of development so that negative and unforeseen consequences, such as increased workload and loss of income earning opportunities, can be identified ;

f. Provide rural women with the appropriate technology

and suitable training enabling them to improve and promote their traditional small-scale in-home industries ;

g. Encourage the participation of rural women, in all forms of social organization of labour, with a view to their achieving, *inter alia*, control over their wage levels, participation in the production process and greater equality in working conditions ;

h. Foster the effective participation of rural women in the cultural, political, economic and social activities of the community ;

i. Create and strengthen the necessary infrastructure to lighten the workload of rural women, through, *inter-alia*, the application of appropriate technology but ensuring that such measures do not result in occupational displacement of women ;

j. Design and carry out literacy and training campaigns for specific rural areas, promoting the effective participation of women in such campaigns ;

k. Improve employment opportunities for women in agricultural and non-agricultural jobs in rural areas by providing training and ensuring an adequate allocation of material, technical and financial resources, so as to provide an alternative to migration to urban areas and ensure a balanced development in the other social services with a view to narrowing the existing development gap between rural and urban sector, thereby preventing migration and its harmful consequences ;

l. Examine and strengthen rural women's participation and contribution in and benefit from development and diversification of the forest economy ;

m. Establish special schemes to provide basic education for children and adults in remote, sparsely populated or very underprivileged rural areas, for example, by setting up children's hostels which provide board and lodging ;

n. Increase rural women's access to rural services by broadening the range of agricultural training and extension programmes to support women's roles in activities of agricul-

tural production, processing and marketing and by increasing the number of women in the training and extension programmes of development agencies at all levels ;

o. Promote the processing of agricultural products by national, community, State or mixed enterprises ; create jobs for rural women and families in the agro-industrial sector ; and design and implement national plans for the development of the agro-industrial sector and rural industries.

### *Child care*

201. To develop or extend government-supported early childhood services appropriate to the individual family's needs.

202. Enable women, and especially women, to discharge their responsibilities with regard to their children, and combine their work outside the home with their responsibilities as mothers. Special efforts should also be made to enable fathers to assume their share of family responsibilities.

### *Priority areas for action*

203. Governments should adopt the necessary measures to :

a. Include provision of community-based, work-based and work-related child care services, out-of-school hours and holiday care, crisis care and care for those families engaged in shift work ;

b. Improve the existing services by improving the competence of the persons providing them, the quality of the services provided, health conditions and the material aspects of the services ;

c. Create new services suited to the needs and conditions of working women and undertake the necessary studies to determine the real nature of those needs ;

d. Provide the necessary services at the lowest cost so as to match the resources and possibilities of women with limited incomes ;

e. Involve mothers in the planning of those services, and in their provision and assessment on a continuous basis so that they can be developed ;

f. Encourage child care centres in shopping centres to cater for occasional care needs.

*Migrant women*

204. Migrant women, including wage earners and the family of migrant workers, should have the same access to education, training, employment and support and health services as the national population.

205. Governments should adopt the necessary measures to :

a. Provide language and literacy training facilities in the community and at the work place. Access to these courses should be facilitated by income maintenance and child care services ;

b. Provide orientation and information programmes, including information on employment and training to all migrant women, in their own languages where necessary, to assist them in settling into the host country ;

c. Establish vocational training and counseling programmes, where necessary, including interpretation services ;

d. Ensure that social support and health services interpreters or bilingual workers ;

e. Encourage and assist union and employer organizations to inform migrant women about industrial legislation, procedures and rights ;

f. Provide culturally appropriate child care services to meet the needs of migrant and minority children and their families ;

g. Ensure migrant women, on a basis of equality with the national population, general education and vocational/professional training. Measures should be taken to improve the level of education and training of migrant women through language and literacy courses upon arrival in the host country. Special education and training facilities should be provided for marriageable daughters of migrant workers who are of compulsory school age but who for various reasons do not attend school in the host country. Special attention should be given

to reaching migrant women, for instance through the mass media, notably radio. Supplementary training and special guidance is necessary for social workers and teachers. In most cases these will, of necessity, have to be women ;

h. Ensure, on a basis of equality with the indigenous population, equal health care for migrant women. Measures should be taken to improve the health status of migrant women, paying special attention to stress-related ailments caused by differences in cultural, social and religious conditions. Provide additional training for domestic health care work on the differing cultural and religious attitudes migrant women may have towards health and ill-health.

*Unemployed women*

206. Governments should take steps to ensure that unemployed women have access to secure employment.

207. Governments should adopt the necessary measures to :

a. Provide formal and non-formal training and retraining to equip unemployed women with marketable employment skills. Such training should include personal and vocational development programmes ;

b. Guarantee to unemployed woman social security benefits, adequate accommodation, and medical services on the basis of individual need.

*Women who alone are responsible for their families*

208. Governments should ensure that women who alone are responsible for their families receive a level of income sufficient themselves and their families in dignity and independence.

209. Governments should take the necessary measures to :

a. Provide training and retraining for secure employment through programmes which should include income maintenance, child care, parental leave and personal and vocational development programmes ;

b. Assist women who alone are responsible for their families to obtain secure and appropriate accommodation ;

c. Guarantee favourable access to finance and credit,



medical and health services.

*Young women*

210. Promote specific government policies for the education, health and employment of young women so that, in view of the role they play in revitalizing and carrying on systems of behaviour, attitudes and values, they receive the guidance and support they need, during the time when they are planning their future lives, to act wisely in crucial situations, such as the adoption of values and attitudes ; the choice of a husband ; the birth and raising of their first child ; access to their first job ; and election to office.

211. Governments should take the necessary measures to :

a. Give special attention to the education of young women, who are the only human resource with a possibility of bringing about change in the future, with a view to ensuring that they are consciously involved in social and political development ; that they enjoy and exercise the right responsibility) deliberately and willingly to found a family ; and that they are given more and better opportunities to take part in the process of production ;

b. Give priority attention to young women in matters relating to food and health in general in order to improve the living conditions of present and future generations and to permit the exercise of the right to health.

INTERNATIONAL TARGETS AND STRATEGIES

*The Programme of Action at the international and regional levels*

212. International targets and strategies both at the regional and the global levels should be based on a clear recognition that peace, security and national independence are essential prerequisites for an environment wherein the rights, responsibilities and roles of women can be promoted and the three objectives of the Decade—equality, development and peace—can be attained.

213. The perpetuation of global economic inequalities and economic dependence, which are the product of an economic system that is unfair and incompatible with the development of countries, slows down the process of development of all nations, particularly of the developing countries, and inhibits the full utilization of the material and human potentials of those countries, including women. The elaboration of an international development strategy for the third United Nations Development Decade, formulated within the framework of the new international economic order and directed towards the achievement of its objectives, is thus of fundamental importance for the achievement of the goals of the United Nations Decade for women. It is essential to establish goals envisaging the assumption by women of full economic, political, cultural and social responsibility.

214 Progress towards disarmament can greatly contribute to the achievement of an adequate economic, social and cultural environment and enhance the development process through reallocation of resources, particularly to the developing countries.

215. One of the concerns of the international community has been the need to restructure and reformulate the policies of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system so that it can help speed up the establishment of the New International Economic Order, the development of developing countries, and the promotion of the goals of the United Nations Decade for Women.

216. The restructuring has taken into account the need for decentralization of certain activities and the strengthening of regional programmes, particularly in the areas of economic and technical co-operation, in advisory services and training and research, data collection and analysis. The past few years have also witnessed the formulation by the regional commissions of regional plans of action for the integration of women into development and programmes aimed at implementation of some of their provisions. Of utmost importance, however, is

the need to integrate women at both regional and global levels into the priority areas mentioned above in a programme of concerted and sustained international action for the second half of the Decade and beyond, until the plans to attain women's integration in development are fully implemented.

217. Member States are increasingly looking to the United Nations and to organizations in the United Nations system to take more dynamic international action in promoting women's full and equal partnership in development, both as contributors and beneficiaries. This is evidenced by the increasing number of resolutions, plans and policy declarations. Commensurate with the need for more dynamic programmes and policies is the need for co-ordination of activities of the various organizations in the United Nations system as well as the appropriate institutional arrangements, within them, involving, wherever necessary, structural transformations. There is also a need for the development of relevant methodologies for integration of women in all their programmes and activities. In line with the integrated nature of the development process itself and with the need to reduce both isolated actions and overlapping of activities, the Programme of Action aims also at greater cohesiveness and co-ordination of efforts of the various organizations.

218. The Programme seeks to outline essential strategies and broad areas for international action. International action in this context includes regional action. However, some recommendations are addressed specifically to regional commissions and to other organizations concerned in the United Nations system for action at the regional, subregional and national levels in order to assist Governments and supplement national programmes.

#### INTERNATIONAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

219. All organizations in the United Nations system, in closer co-operation with intergovernmental and non-governmental

organizations concerned, should support efforts towards establishing, strengthening and implementing national, regional and global programmes aimed at women's integration in development, revising and redefining, if necessary, development concepts, objectives and policies to achieve it. These programmes at the international level should take into full consideration the essential linkages in the development process at national, subregional and international levels, and with adequate communication between institutions and machineries related to women and major planning units at all these levels.

220. In order to achieve the targets envisaged for the third United Nations Development Decade, all development planning should take due account of the potential contribution and the interests of women. This consideration will lead to more appropriate development programmes which will increase productivity, whilst at the same time guarding against the possibility of any adverse impact which the transfer of technology and the redeployment of industry may have. Development projects should strongly emphasize the indigenous capabilities of the developing countries and enhance their creative capacity.

221. New approaches should be developed for increasing the mobilization of women's resources both for advancing their socio-economic status and increasing productivity. To this end, they should offer, *inter alia*, special incentives to develop co-operative movements, particularly among women of the poorer sectors of society, aimed at developing co-operative technology enterpriss for community self-reliance in water, energy health, sanitation and housing, day care centres, and other basic services.

222. Multilateral and bilateral development and other organizations as well as non-governmental organizations working in the field of development should continue to provide development assistance to programmes and projects of developing countries which promote women's integration and participation in all aspects of the development process, also within the framework

of technical co-operation among developing countries. In this connexion efforts should be made to utilize fully locally available expertise in project design and implementation and to ensure greater quality in the project results through, among others, flexible implementation procedures. These programmes and projects should *inter alia* focus on efforts to strengthen developing countries' capabilities to plan and implement programmes for women, including capabilities to develop alternative technology, research and the application of renewable sources of energy.

223. The United Nations Voluntary Fund for the Decade for Women should continue to intensify its efforts to give special support to women most in need, and to encourage consideration of women in development planning. Contributions to the Voluntary Fund will need to be greatly increased during the second half of the Decade if demands now being made on its resources are to be adequately met. Adequate development funds should be available for activities specific to the acceleration of the full participation of women in economic and social development at national, regional and international levels.

224. Studies should be undertaken by the United Nations organizations concerned to identify new ways and means of facilitating the integration of women, especially of the poor sectors of society, into the mainstream of development, including women workers in agriculture and industry. The ILO, in co-operation with bodies such as UNCTAD, UNIDO and FAO, should develop studies to assess the working and employment conditions of rural women with a view to assisting Governments to revise national and international policies concerning wage and labour policies, as well as trade agreements and prices of these commodities where women's and men's wages are adversely affected by and also affect the exchange earnings of the developing countries as obtained from the export of such commodities. UNESCO, in co-operation with other United Nations organs and organizations concerned, should continue

to prepare studies and sponsor projects with a view to assisting Governments to assess progress made and obstacles that women face in gaining access to and enjoying primary, secondary and post-secondary educational opportunities and to contribute to the development of research and teaching about women at the university level and in non-formal education. WHO, in co-operation with United Nations organs and organizations concerned should continue to assess progress made and obstacles women face in gaining access to health care particularly progress in the development of primary health care.

225. The United Nations Secretariat should undertake a comparative compilation of national legislative measures which are aimed at promoting sex equality. Such a compilation would assist in the introduction of new laws designed to integrate women into all fields of activities by generating ideas and exerting persuasion. The compilation should be issued within the framework of the United Nations Legislative Series.

226. International and regional organizations should provide assistance, if requested, to national machineries for women, for improving their capabilities and resources to accelerate integration of women in the development process and take up programmes and projects for them.

227. In the framework of bilateral development co operation efforts should be made, in conformity with national priorities, to strengthen national programmes aimed at the full participation and integration of women in all aspects of development. including participation of women at the grass-roots level. In all bilateral development activities women should participate in the preparation and implementation of programmes and projects.

228. The eleventh special session of the General Assembly on economic development should take into full account the women's role in economic development; the forthcoming United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy, the programmes for the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade, and other forthcoming international

conferences should also take into account issues of particular interest to women.

229. The United Nations and its organizations should, in co-operation with national Governments, develop strategies for increasing women's participation in the social, economic and political life, ensuring full and effective participation of women in all sectors and at all levels of the development process, including planning, decision-making and implementation, and, in keeping with these objectives seeking to :

a. Reduce the burden on women of tasks traditionally performed by them in the home and in food production and child care through appropriate technology and a fair division of labour between women and men ;

b. Counteract factors which tend to keep girls and women out of schools and training centres ;

c. Create new employment and occupational mobility opportunities for women ;

d. Increase the economic returns to women for their labour, and implement the principle of equal pay for work of equal value ;

e. Recognize the important contribution of women to economic development, raise the productivity of women's labour for their own benefit and the benefit of their own families, and at the same time undertake appropriate structural changes to prevent women's unemployment ;

f. Recognize the vital role of women in agriculture and guarantee them equitable access to land, technology, water, other natural resources, inputs and services and equal opportunities to develop their skills ;

g. Promote equal participation of women in the industrialization process, counteract possible negative effects of industrialization, and ensure that scientific and technological development will benefit both women and men ;

h. Ensure women's active participation in and access to primary health care, in the light of their specific health needs.

230. International programmes and policies—including regional ones—are grouped into five areas. Each is covered below in a separate section,

*Technical co-operation, training and advisory services*

231. Technical co-operation programmes for women should be conceived in the context of over-all development and not as welfare programmes.

232. Technical co-operation activities should be directed towards assisting and complementing Governments' efforts aimed at enhancing the development of human resources particularly among the most disadvantaged groups of population with a special emphasis on women.

233. All organizations of the United Nations system, including the regional commissions, should :

a. Review existing and proposed plans projects in this area with the aim of integrating the issues of concern to women in all programmes and projects in order to improve the effectiveness of those projects as well as to improve the status of women ;

b. Encourage and support Governments and non-governmental organizations, including research institutions, in elaborating appropriate technology projects and in identifying ways in which women can participate in and contribute to the effectiveness of development projects and improve their own economic and social condition ;

c. Organize seminars and workshops on the issues related to women and development and ensure that the topic of women and development be included in the substantive discussions of international conferences ;

d. Assist Governments in organizing more training courses with the assistance of the International Research and Training for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) for improving women's planning, technical and managerial skills in different fields, especially of functionaries implementing programmes and policies for women. Promote fellowships and other special



educational and training programmes to increase the capacity of women workers and planners so that they can gain better occupational and social status ;

e. Assist national and regional programmes benefiting women in rural areas. Programmes for women should be viewed as an investment in the process of development and women should be included as active participants in the design, planning and implementation of projects in all sectors and not simply as beneficiaries of services ;

f. Ensure that technical co-operation, training and advisory services by the organizations of the United Nations system are in conformity with national objectives and with policies outlined in the World Plan of Action and the Programme for the Second Half of the Decade.

234. UNDP should intensify its efforts to encourage and assist Governments to find innovative approaches to achieve their development goals through incorporating and benefiting women by :

a. Instructing resident representatives to advise Governments on issues in country programmes of particular interest to women, and to monitor regularly existing programmes and promote project development, co-ordination and co-operation among United Nations and other organizations so as to further the achievement of the goals of the Decade ;

b. Continuing to promote regional, subregional and national projects through regional commissions, national machineries for women and research and training centres, especially activities leading to the introduction and development of new programmes in order to achieve the integration of women in development ;

c. Continuing its support for the Voluntary Fund for the Decade for Women.

235. Government should formulate, as part of their development co-operation policies, guidelines for the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women.

*Mobilization of human resources*

236. Efforts should be intensified within the programmes of organizations of the United Nations system to involve more men in programmes for attitudinal change in all the relevant sectors, particularly employment, health, education, rural development and political participation. Men should be involved in health-programmes to ensure that the responsibility for improving the situation of their families and communities is not the sole responsibility of women.

237. The effective participation of women, particularly in the developing countries, in the programmes of organizations in the United Nations system should be encouraged, including their participation in interregional and regional seminars and meetings.

238. Women at all levels, especially those from grass-roots organizations, should be encouraged to play a more effective role at the decision-making level in international organizations.

239. United Nations organizations and Member States are urged to take the necessary measures to increase the proportion of women by nominating and appointing women, particularly from developing countries, for posts in decision-making levels in secretariats and expert bodies. Member States are also urged to increase the proportion of women on their delegations to all United Nations meetings, including meetings of preparatory committees for international conferences and to prepare women to take an active role in such conferences. In this regard, Member States in co-operation with United Nations bodies should make arrangements for the inclusion of items on women's issues in the agenda of such conferences.

240. Measures should be taken to reinforce efforts of Member States, specially developing ones, to develop and strengthen endogenous capabilities and capacities for the elaboration of policies for science and technology and for their application to the solution of problems of development, with special emphasis on the disparities in the access of women to scientific and

technical education and training.

*Assistance to women in southern Africa*

241. The recommendations are addressed to United Nations organizations, the specialized agencies, Governments, international and regional intergovernmental organizations, women's and anti-*apartheid* groups, non-governmental organizations and other groups.

242. The assistance provided will be channelled through the southern African liberation movements recognized by the Organization of African Unity. It is divided into the following categories of assistance :

a. Legal, humanitarian, moral and political assistance to women inside South Africa and Namibia persecuted under repressive and discriminatory legislation and practices and to their families and to women in refugee camps ;

b. Training and assistance to integrate women into positions of leadership and support within the national liberation movements in the struggle for liberation ;

c. Training and assistance for women to play roles in all areas after liberation in the reconstruction of their respective countries ;

d. International support for and co-operation with the southern African women's struggle ;

e. To disseminate information about *apartheid* and racism and its effects on women in southern Africa in particular, and to involve all women in efforts to eradicate *apartheid* and racism and to promote and maintain peace ;

f. To assist in the strengthening of women's sections where they already exist in the national liberation movements and the creation of such sections where they do not currently exist as a means of accelerating the achievement of equal opportunity for women and their full integration in national life. Such women's sections through the national liberation movements should, in consultations with the United Nations organizations,

the specialized agencies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, determine and make known their policy and programme priorities.

243. To call on Member States of the United Nations which have not yet done so to ratify the 1973 International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of *Apartheid*.  
*Assistance to the Palestinian women inside and outside the occupied territories*

244. The United Nations organizations, the specialized agencies, United Nations organs and funds, Governments, international and regional intergovernmental organizations and other groups are called upon to provide assistance in consultation and co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people :

a. To undertake studies and research pertinent to the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian women with a view to identifying their specific needs and to formulate and implement relevant programmes to meet their needs and to develop resources and potentialities of women ;

b. To provide legal, humanitarian and political assistance to Palestinian women in order to allow them to exercise their human rights ;

c. To establish, expand, and diversify educational and training programmes for Palestinian women with particular emphasis on expanding technical and vocational training ;

d. To safeguard and promote the Palestinian heritage and values as the core of the educational content with a view to preserving the Palestinian national identity.

e. To eliminate all restrictive legal and social measures that hinder Palestinian women from having access to available employment opportunities and equal pay for equal work, and to provide them with equal training and employment opportunities so that they can contribute effectively to the formation of an integrated Palestinian labour force ;

f. To assist materially and technically women's organiza-

tions and associations, and to provide support to the General Union of Palestinian Women with a view to develop their institutional to undertake extension programmes, adult education and literacy programmes for women and child care services ;

g. To formulate and implement integrated health and nutrition programmes ; to train Palestinian women in the various medical and paramedical professions and to strengthen existing health services provided by the Palestinian Red Crescent, particularly those related to maternal and child care ;

h. To collect and disseminate information and data about the effect of Israeli occupation on the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian women and their struggle for achieving self-determination, right of return, and right to national independence and sovereignty.

*Assistance to women refugees and displaced women the world over*

245. Humanitarian assistance to and resettlement of refugees, regardless of sex, race, religion or national origin, and wherever they may find themselves, is an international responsibility which all nations concerned should help bear. Because the overwhelming proportion of refugees are women, who generally suffer more radical changes in role and status than male refugees, the United Nations and other international organizations are urged to address themselves specifically to the problems and vulnerabilities of women.

246. The following recommendations are addressed to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and, within their competence or special interest, the organizations of the United Nations system, specialized agencies, international, regional and intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, women's groups and all other relevant institutions, competent associations, and Governments.

247. The United Nations High Commissioner and other bodies mentioned in paragraph 246, as appropriate, in assisting women refugees, are requested to formulate specific programmes

relevant to them in all phases of refugee life : relief, local integration, resettlement, and voluntary return to their homes. All Governments concerned are invited to help, thereby easing the burden on countries of first asylum in particular. Third countries should be urged to receive refugees for resettlement without discrimination on the basis of sex or lack of qualifications. There is a particularly urgent need for senior level responsibility for the special needs of refugee women, including monitoring, in the UNHCR and other agencies and organizations involved in refugee relief. These programmes should also apply to displaced women, wherever appropriate.

248. It should be recognized that in refugee situations and of displaced persons, women and children form the bulk of the refugees and have particular needs. Therefore special efforts are necessary to ensure their survival and well-being, and to prevent their abuse and exploitation. The traditional disadvantages of many women in society are intensified in refugee situations as well as for displaced persons. This must be recognized in formulating any programmes of assistance. The assistance provided through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees or through bilateral intergovernmental channels as far as resources permit should include the following categories of assistance :

a. Legal, humanitarian and moral assistance to women refugees ensuring for them the fullest respect for their human rights in accordance with the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to prevent exploitation of their ignorance of their rights and of their comparatively weak position ;

b. Special relief efforts directed to refugee women and children, and particularly to handicapped persons, to ensure that available aid reaches them ;

c. Assistance and counselling to women refugees at an early

phase of their arrival in the country of asylum, with emphasis on the development of selfreliance ;

d. Special health care measures and health counselling, including family planning services on a nationally acceptable and voluntary basis for women refugees, as well as supplemental feeding programmes for pregnant and lactating women, provided through means relevant to their culture and traditions, and by women medical workers where necessary ;

e. Training and educational programmes, including orientation, language and job training, designed to facilitate the necessary adjustments of women refugees to their new life and the preservation of their cultural links with their country of origin ;

f. Special national and international efforts to facilitate family reunion and support for tracing programmes ;

g. Skill development programmes for refugee women so that they may learn to employ their potential for income-earning activity ;

h. The UNHCR should encourage Governments in whose territory abuses of women refugees take place to bring to justice the perpetrators of such abuses. Host country Governments should be encouraged to allow sufficient international personnel in refugee camps to discourage exploitation or any attacks upon women refugees.

249. Assistance should be provided in strengthening the counselling programme for women refugees, both in rural settlements and urban centres, and the design of special social work programmes to reach women refugees, where such programmes do not at present exist. Special orientation programmes should be provided for women refugees awaiting resettlement in third countries.

250. The role of women refugees in the operation and administration of refugee camps should be substantially expanded, including distribution of food and other supplies, and the design of training and orientation programmes. The UNHCR is urged to develop policies which actively involve refugee

women in self-help programmes in an effort to utilize their skills and talents fully.

251. The United Nations system should give high priority in its public information activities to the need to assist refugee women and children the world over.

*Elaboration and review of international standards*

252. Every effort should be made by the United Nations and organizations in the United Nations system to encourage Governments :

a. To sign and ratify or accede to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 34/180, of 18 December 1979, so that it will come into force at an early date within the period of this Programme ;

b. To sign and ratify or accede to, if they have not yet done so, all conventions of the United Nations and specialized agencies which relate to women.

253. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women should keep under review the reporting systems under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women once it comes into force. The Commission on the Status of Women should keep under review the reporting system for the implementation of the World Plan of Action and the implementation of the Programme for the Second Half of the Decade.

254. The United Nations and organizations in the United Nations system should, in the formulation of international standards in areas where they do not exist, take into account the needs of women.

255. The specialized agencies should submit reports on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities, when requested to do so, and should attend the meeting of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women when invited to do so.



256. Measures should be taken by bodies and organizations in the United Nations system, particularly UNCTAD, UNIDO, the Centre on Transnational Corporations, the International Labour Organisation and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, to include specific provisions relating to women in the international codes of conduct for transnational corporations and on the transfer of technology aimed at diminishing any adverse effects of redeployment of industry and technology.

*Research, data collection and analysis*

257. The United Nations, the specialized agencies, and the regional commissions should give high priority to undertaking multisectoral and interdisciplinary action-oriented research in relevant and important areas where information does not already exist on the ways of integrating women in development, with a view to formulating development objectives, strategies and policy measures responsive to the needs of women and men. Such research should utilize existing institutions such as the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women as well as more use of joint institutions which deal with questions concerning status of women. The research should be aimed at developing effective methodologies of planning for women's development and at evaluating the participation of women in the informal sectors of the economy ; the health status of women ; the double burden of working women and data on the degree of absence of women because of maternity, educational opportunities or lack thereof for women, in particular factors contributing to illiteracy, full access of women, including drop-outs among the female population, to all types and all levels of education ; the conditions of the female-headed household ; the participation in the formal sectors of the economy ; political participation and the nature of the contributions of women's organizations. Emphasis should also be given to fuller and more systematic analysis of

all the interrelationships between women's roles in development and demographic phenomena. Research should also be conducted on employment opportunities projected for a period of five or ten years after the Decade for Women, and on training/educational programmes that will meet the need for the specific work force so indentified.

258. Taking into consideration that international migration has become an enduring process in the labour market, the special problems of migrant women, as related to their economic functions, legal and social status, difficulties arising from language barriers and the education of the second generation deserve special attention. The ILO, in co-operation with bodies such as UNESCO, FAO and WHO, should continue and develop studies to assess the employment, health and educational conditions of migrant women with a view to assisting Governments in reviewing their national and international policies concerning employment, social security, housing, social welfare policies, and the preservation of the cultural heritage as well as the use of mass media as supportive channels of information for migrant women.

259. The United Nations, in close collaboration with specialized agencies and regional commissions and on the basis of the work done by INSTRAW, should prepare and make available compendiums of statistics on women, containing the most recent data, time-trend analyses where available, as well as national and international measures designed to improve the situation of women. The *Directory of International Statistics*, prepared by the Statistical Office, Department of International Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, should include a special section indicating where relevant data exist by which progress toward equality between the sexes can be monitored.

260. The Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, in agreement with INSTRAW, should, as soon as possible, include in its pro-

gramme of work consideration of statistics relating to women and develop short-and long-range goals for improving the quality and relevance of data pertaining to the conditions of women. Such discussions should include plans to update data concerning women with a particular emphasis on the development, evaluation and updating of estimates and projections of the participation of women in all areas of national life.

261. The United Nations should, in close collaboration with the specialized agencies, the regional commissions and national Governments encourage statistical operations and practices that are free from sex-based stereotypes and appropriate research methodology that would have relevance to the participation of women in development and equality between the sexes.

262. The United Nations, with the concerned specialized agencies, should pay special attention to the industries in which the overwhelming majority of employees are female, analyse the causes of their existence and the possibilities of new technological patterns leading to deep changes in the respective branches.

263. At the regional level the regional commissions, in collaboration with the specialized agencies, should :

a. Assist the countries of the region to establish indicators by which progress toward equality between the sexes can be monitored. In establishing such a set of indicators, Governments should be advised to take into account the social and cultural realities of the country, the current state of the country's statistical development as well as their individual policy priorities ;

b. Prepare for each region an inventory of social, economic and demographic indicators relevant to the analysis of the status of women in the region. For a better evaluation of development programmes, the utilization of, and access to, such data should be ensured ;

c. Assist countries in the development of surveys carried out as part of the national household surveys capability programme,

including batteries of questions of special relevance to the participation of women in development and equality between the sexes ;

d. Increase their level of investment in long-range fundamental research on women and development, without violation of national priorities, so as to provide a sound scientific base for development planning.

*Dissemination of information and experience*

264. The respective specialized agencies of the United Nations, during the second part of this Decade, should give special consideration to the conditions of work of women, including the problems of working hours and working norms for women, and bring their conclusions to the attention of member States.

265. The United Nations and UNESCO should ensure the inclusion of women in the current work undertaken in preparation for the new international information order as both recipients and participants in information systems in which their problems and issues are considered. In the definition of new communication policies the participation of women and their positive and dynamic image must be emphasized.

266. The United Nations system should ensure that women's issues form an integral part of the existing international information systems and data banks (such as AGRIS, INRES, INTIB, DIS), particularly the Information System Unit within the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, in order to facilities free exchange of experience and knowledge among international organizations and their member States.

267. The joint United Nations Information Committee in carrying out its responsibilities for programmes of social and economic information should :

a. Ensure that its annual plans of action take into consideration issues and topics of particular interest to women,

matters which particularly affect women, as well as their participation in information activities such as press, publications, radio programmes, film and television projects, reportage of field trips, seminars, etc. ;

b. Advocate that an information component be built into projects such as those assisted by the Voluntary Fund for the Decade and by other organizations of the United Nations system, and which would be disseminated by the Department of Public Information, specialized agencies etc. ;

c. Ensure that guides and directories of the United Nations Information Centres contain relevant data and information about programmes and activities of the United Nations relating to women.

268. The United Nations and other organizations in the United Nations system such as UNCTAD, UNDP, UNFPA, UNEP, UNIDO, UNICEF, UNITAR, the ILO, FAO, UNESCO, WHO, and WFP, should include in their publications, media support activities, training programmes and seminars etc., specific guidelines on issues and topics of particular interest to women and those in which women could be successfully integrated. In particular, United Nations agencies concerned with development, education, employment, health, population, food production etc., should increase their information output on matters affecting women, especially in developing countries, with emphasis on reaching mass audiences in rural and isolated regions and countries where women tend to be cut off from the main media channels.

269. In its programme on major political, economic and social issues as well as on human interest stories, United Nations radio should include contributions and participation of women in all these areas. The present weekly radio programme on women should be continued through the Decade or longer as the need may be, with adequate provision being made to adapt it in different languages and distribute it more extensively. Co-production agreements between United Nations visual ser-

vice and local networks to expand the number of films on United Nations topics should include co-production with women producers in developing countries on films related to women's issues.

270. The United Nations should issue booklets, pamphlets and publications with periodic progress reports on Decade activities and encourage the exchange of information and experience between women in Member States through study visits and the distribution of publications. The United Nations Handbook on the New International Economic order should include data and information on aspects of women's participation. The *Development Forum* and other publications should contain items related to the Decade. The United Nations Information Centres should improve their library materials on women and disseminate information on women more actively, especially in developing countries. Information on women should be on the agenda of meetings of the directors of the Centres throughout the Decade.

271. The United Nations and organizations of the United Nations system dealing with development should strengthen their information components relating to women in development and highlight the communication component of development projects. Well-documented and built-in communication components should be included in all development programmes or projects for the integration of women in development, and more adequate evaluation of the uses of media in development support to spread knowledge and increase the possibility of transfer. The United Nations and organizations of the United Nations system should collect and disseminate information on training programmes in development communication with special reference to programmes for women.

272. Information including detailed bibliographies of studies and other materials produced by the United Nations and its specialized agencies on women in the development process should be widely distributed to member nations and appropriate

private research organizations to facilitate access to such information.

*Review and appraisal*

273. The United Nations system should continue to carry out a comprehensive and critical biennial review and appraisal of progress achieved in implementing the provisions of the World Plan of Action and of the Programme for the Second Half of the Decade. The central role in the carrying out of this review and appraisal should be played by the Commission on the Status of Women. The reporting system as well as the measures for dissemination of information should be designed for the effective use of the result of monitoring by all bodies concerned.

274. The Commission on the Status of Women and the Branch for the Advancement of Women should be strengthened by resetting priorities within existing budgetary resources. The integrated reporting system should be improved, as should the Commission's ability to consider communications and the capacity for publicizing its work.

275. With a view to achieving the full integration of women into the over-all development planning of the United Nations, the review and appraisal of progress made in implementing the World Plan of Action and the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the Decade should be part of the procedures for the review and appraisal of progress made in the implementation of international development strategy for the third United Nations Development Decade.

276. The specialized agencies and organizations of the United Nations system as well as other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned should consider the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the Decade and assist in its implementation.

277. The existing special mechanisms within the United Nations bodies and existing specialized agencies should be

strengthened to implement the Programme of Action, to increase the incorporation of women's needs into all their programmes and activities and also to increase women's participation in and benefit from those programmes and activities.

278. The secretariats of all organizations within the United Nations system as well as of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned should amend their recruitment, training, promotion and remuneration policies as necessary in order to ensure equal treatment and status for men and women employed by the organizations whether as temporary, fixed-term or permanent employees or as consultants. Such organizations should, when requesting data on women's employment from member countries with a view to publication, provide and publish comparable data on the situation as regards women's employment within the organization concerned.

279. Guidelines should be established wherever they do not already exist for the study of programmes and projects in respect of their likely impact on women, and measures should be taken for monitoring and evaluating such programmes with respect to their benefits to women.

280. Co-ordination and co-operation among the specialized agencies and United Nations bodies should be effected by increasing use of the Inter-Agency Programme for the Decade for Women and of the Branch for the Advancement of Women.

281. The regional commissions in their periodic reviews and appraisals submitted to the Economic and Social Council should report fully on specific aspects of the situation of women in every sector of their development programmes on the basis of replies to the questionnaire on the implementation of the World Plan of Action and the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the Decade. These should be supplemented by appraisals of specific sectors undertaken by the regional commissions and specialized agencies, reports of relevant regional meeting of the United Nations and other documents and independent research.



282. Regional commissions should submit reports regularly to the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat on this Programme as part of the over-all review and appraisal of the World Plan of Action. There should be a close co-ordination of the regional programmes for the advancement of women with United Nations Headquarters to ensure a better use of resources.

283. Regional commissions should ensure that the high-level regional intergovernmental and expert meetings which they periodically convene should include, in their over-all periodic appraisal, an assessment of the situation of women as a fundamental prerequisite for planning action programmes to meet the objectives of the third development decade and the New International Economic Order.

284. Special efforts should be made by the United Nations and regional commissions to assist Governments of Member States which have difficulty in providing resources to complete the questionnaire and submit data required for the review and appraisal.

#### REGIONAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

285. The international policies and programmes outlined above have clear application at the regional level and also be regarded as regional priorities. In addition, the regional commissions, in co-operation with the regional offices of the specialized agencies, have specific responsibilities to provide assistance to governments and non-governmental organizations for developing policies, strategies and programmes for the second half of the Decade in the light of the review and appraisal of progress achieved in the first half.

286. The strengthening of appropriate regional action programmes for women should be based on the development of co-operation between the countries of the region with the aim of promoting the principle of self-reliance. The formulation of regional policies and programmes is a multidimensional

process requiring the adoption of action-oriented measures that are both bilateral and multilateral in scope and which require an increase in financial, technical and personnel resources to implement effectively regional programmes and priorities. To this end, regional commissions should adopt the following measures :

a. Integrate the recommendations of this Programme into the work programme of their respective sectoral units so that its implementation contributes to the development strategy of the third United Nations Development Decade ;

b. Promote fellowship and other special training programmes, particularly in the tertiary sectors which comprise the majority of the female labour force both in the rural and urban areas, so that women can improve and/or gain occupational and socio-economic status ;

c. Strengthen the information and data collection systems with a view to providing better analysis of data on the situation and work of women, including, in particular, improved national, regional and subregional reviews of progress achieved in the implementation of this programme of action ; and providing a basis for more effective advisory services to governments regarding programmes for women ;

d. Intensify their activities in promoting adequate national social infrastructure allowing women and men to discharge their dual role in the family and in society ;

e. Undertake "skilled womenpower" inventories at national subregional and regional levels so that trained women can have equal opportunities to be recruited in jobs related to main areas of the development process at national, regional and international levels.

#### *Institutional arrangements*

287. Measures should be taken for :

a. Strengthening the offices of the regional commissions by recruiting women for posts at a high level of decision-making

and responsibility. Such posts should include those of programme officers provided for in regular budgets and not only from extrabudgetary sources, and responsible for implementing the programmes for the second half of the Decade. The regional commissions should establish posts at a high level to co-ordinate and implement policies and programmes relating specifically to the status of women ;

b. The reinforcement of the regional centres for research and training.

## **VOLUNTARY FUND FOR THE UNITED NATION DECADE FOR WOMEN**

The voluntary fund for the un decade for women was created by the United Nations General Assembly following the International Women's Year, 1975. Resources of the Fund are used to support technical co-operation activities, regional and international programmes, joint inter-organizational programmes, research, communication support and public information activities. Priority is given to the least developed, land-locked and island countries among developing countries, and special consideration given to programmes and projects which benefit rural women and poor women in urban areas.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations is advised on the application of the Fund's criteria to its use by a Consultative Committee representing member States of the five regions of the world. Reports of the United Nations Secretary-General on the use of the Fund are reviewed every year by the General Assembly. Contributions to the Fund are made by governments, organizations and individuals.

### **WHAT TYPE OF PROJECTS DOES THE FUND SUPPORT ?**

By mid-1980, the Fund has supported over a hundred different projects in developing countries and regions around the world. Its diverse activities include fishouaring techniques and marketing, radio for non-formal education of women,

providing development planning consultants, training rural trainers, testing innovative health-delivery systems, improving food production and processing, and training traditional women potters in manufacturing of modern construction materials.

In 1979, the Consultative Committee on the Fund advised that it might be useful for the Fund to identify itself with one or two priority needs of women in developing countries. One area suggested was that of energy, because of the growing scarcity of woodlots for cooking and heating fuel. To date, the Fund is supporting six projects in Africa and the Asia/Pacific regions addressed to this problem.

The Fund is increasingly involved with support of small-scale industries, including training in management and marketing of products. A handbook on revolving loan funds for community groups will be available for general distribution.

Projects for national development planning, including training workshops and provision of consultants are completed or underway in every developing region, and include both men and women planners. The Fund also invests in training women for project identification, development, execution and evaluation.

#### HOW ARE PROJECTS SELECTED FOR FINANCING ?

Once it is assured that projects will benefit low-income women, either directly or through planning, research, or information activities, several other guidelines of the Fund are considered. These include :

- \* Working capital for small-scale projects can be financed through provision of revolving loan funds ;
- \* Equipment and supplies can be funded as an integral part of a technical assistance activity ;
- \* Buildings and fixed capital expenses are not usually funded ;
- \* Scholarships and fellowships are not funded when these already exist in the region and should be made available to women as well as men ;

- \* Projects with a major focus on population should be referred to the several available funding sources ;
- \* Research projects should be carefully designed and country-specific ; they should ordinarily be related to the planning or evaluation of particular projects and programmes ;
- \* The recipient government or agency is expected to make a substantial contribution to a project, in cash or in kind ;
- \* Review and evaluation components should be an integral part of projects as should assurance that resources are available for any follow-up implications ;
- \* The fund is not used to develop a "basic component" for women if the objectives of a project undertaken by a larger funding organization clearly require a component of that kind as part of the planned activities.

Voluntary Fund resources are used, in particular, for the following :

- \* Innovative or experimental activities that may, if successful, later be funded from other sources ;
- \* Small projects that might not be acceptable to larger funds ;
- \* Supplementing other work without waiting for the negotiations which would precede an additional phase of an ongoing project.

WHAT ARE THE PROCEDURES FOR APPLYING TO THE FUND ?

Project proposals may be formulated by governments, inter-governmental, non-governmental, or United Nations organizations. Projects initiated by individuals must be submitted through a recognized institution or organization.

Procedures for submission of project proposals from national, regional and inter-regional or global levels are as follows :

*National level projects :*

- \* Project proposals prepared by governments, non-governmental organizations and/or United Nations organizations.

for national level activities are submitted to the Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the country ;

- \* The resident representative reviews the project proposal and in the case of non-governmental activities, ensures that Government has no objections to the project ;
- \* The resident representative forwards the proposal to the Voluntary Fund with his appraisal, and sends a copy to the appropriate United Nations regional commission for comments which are sent to the Voluntary Fund ; and
- \* The executing agency of approved project (s) should submit a substantive and financial report to the Voluntary Fund coordinating office twice a year, in June and in December, through the UNDP resident representative.

***Regional level projects :***

- \* National projects involving direct contributions by regular or short-term staff of the regional commissions may be formulated and/or selected by the concerned regional commission, in consultation with Government and UNDP ;
- \* The regional commissions make the final selection of all regional projects for forwarding to the Voluntary Fund ;
- \* The regional commissions are responsible to the Voluntary Fund for financial and substantive reporting on both types of projects twice each year, in June and in December ; and
- \* Senior women's programme officers of the regional commissions may be called upon to assist countries with project development.

Projects may be submitted at any time ; project reviews take place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York at the end of June and the end of December each year.

***Inter-regional and global projects :***

- \* Project proposals for inter-regional or global activities are submitted directly to the coordinating office of the Fund at United Nations Headquarters ;

- \* Executing agencies are responsible for financial and substantive reports, twice each year, in June and December.**

#### **HOW ARE PROJECTS EVALUATED ?**

The executing agencies should ensure appropriate follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of projects sponsored by the Voluntary Fund. Progress reports should be sent by the sponsoring organization twice each year, by 31 December and 30 June, through the UNDP country office, the United Nations regional commission, or directly to the Fund co-ordinating office, as appropriate.

#### **WHAT FORMAT IS USED FOR PROJECT PROPOSALS ?**

Project proposals should be submitted using the UNDP format if the project is large-scale. Alternatively, the Voluntary Fund format may be used for small-scale, short-term projects.

The **VOLUNTARY FUND FORMAT** is outlined below. It has been designed in such a way that implementation requires only the elaboration of the project document into a work plan and into a guide for monitoring and evaluation of actual project operation and results. A clear and concise statement of the approach as well as the expected results and the costing is critical to the project development, appraisal and recommendation process.

The submitting agency should forward six copies of the project document, together with its appraisal, to the Voluntary Fund co-ordinating office at UN Headquarters.

#### **BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION**

Describe the existing situation and the problems which the project is expected to solve. Note any ongoing activities which will be the basis for the project and the organizations currently assisting.

Indicate how the need for the project came to be determined.



Explain how the intended beneficiaries are involved in project planning.

Are the local authorities aware of the project? Please specify.

If the project is to be carried out by a governmental or non-governmental organization, describe the organization and its experience in the project field. Describe any other organizations which will assist.

#### OBJECTIVES

What long-term development objectives is the project intended to meet?

What are the specific economic and social objectives of the project? Indicate changes that may be expected if the project is successful (for example: increases in income, improved family health, more awareness on the part of policy-makers and planners of women as agents of development, etc.)

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Describe the specific activities to be carried out, showing the timing and duration of each. A time-table or bar chart may be used to illustrate these.

Who and how many people are intended to benefit from the project, both directly and indirectly?

Who will supervise the project? What other specialized staff or expertise will be needed, and how will it be provided?

Will the project be adaptable to other parts of the country, or other countries in the region?

How will the project be financed when external support is finished? Will it be self-supporting?

#### REVIEW AND EVALUATION

How will the project be regularly monitored to assure that it remains directed toward its goals? Who will prepare the

progress reports to the Voluntary Fund, due every 6 months ?

How will the project be evaluated when it is completed, or after two years ? What organizations or independent consultant will assist with the evaluation ?

#### **COST PLAN**

List expenditures by category, including costs of special staff, travel, meetings, training courses, etc. as listed below. If the item "Other" is large, it should be itemized carefully. Inputs from Government or other sources should be noted. If pro-forma costs are used, indicate whether these came from Government, United Nations, etc.

<i>Category</i>	<i>Year 1</i>	<i>Year 2</i>
<b>Project Personnel</b> .....		
Professional.....		
Support Personnel...		
<b>Travel</b> .....		
<b>Training/seminars</b> .....		
<b>Equipment/supplies</b> .....		
<b>Other</b> .....	_____	_____
<b>TOTAL</b> .....	_____	_____
Total amount requested from the Voluntary Fund : _____		

## THE QUEENSLAND PREGNANCY TERMINATION CONTROL BILL

*To Abort or not to Abort : That was the question*

"Action stations !" came the cry. "Ring your Member, write to Dr Edwards. Write to The Cairns Post. My weak protest that I was recovering from a fractured femur brought scant sympathy. "Don't use your femur—use your head !"

The dark clouds seemed to be gathering. Could we push them aside and let some sweet reason in ?

A public meeting was called. Quality speaker. Intelligent questions. No interruptions. Observers very impressed.

Outside, the anti-abortionists were everywhere, extremely vocal, and spending as if there was no tomorrow.

In Brisbane, the tumult and the shouting went on.

In Parliament, the draft of the re-drafted draft of the Pregnancy termination Control Bill was being pushed around. As in a way so were women. They didn't seem to get a mention. How foolish of the Members to have forgotten them, Nobody paid any attention to what seemed to be a distant wail : "What about me ?"

The mental giants were locked in battle. Some Members were wavering. Would the leaders survive? Nobody, it emerged, wanted to own the Bill.

When was the State election ? What was the sex ratio of the voters ? Bill took the Bill under his wing, and far into the night they grappled and talked.

And talked, until they were dizzy. Actually, they'd been dizzy before this. Somehow the vote was taken : 40 to 35 against the Bill. I rang WEL Cairns. "Who is this Mr. Mandor —Gerry—that somebody mentioned ?"

CAIRNS : TROPICAL PARADISE OF A HOLLIBILLY BACKWATER ?

Cairns is the urban centre of Far North Queensland.

Our nearest big city, Townsville, is down the road about as far from us as Canberra is from Sydney, and Brisbane is as far from Cairns as it is from Melbourne. The Brisbane daily papers, flown up by charter plane, cost nearly as much as The National Times. We are isolated by the elements too. In the last big Hot, a helicopter used to land twice a day one house down from my place to pick up any commuter whose business in Cairns was urgent enough.

Even some Brisbanites don't realize our distances. Perfectly competent welfare officers will recommend that Innisfail mothers join Cairns play groups, or that battered women catch a bus in from Gulf settlements.

The population of F.N.Q. is smaller than, though comparable with, Canberra's. Half of it lives in the Cairns/Mulgrave Shire coastal strip which stretches about 60 miles from Buchan's ( "nude beach" ) Point south towards Innisfail. The other half lives scattered over an area one and a half times the size of Victoria.

Cairns looks rather like the usual Oz suburbia in a tropical setting, and mostly fools like it, though it can be more dramatic. The city fulfils most ordinary requirements within walking distance. Cairns has been hailed a microcosm of Australian society, since it's tended to have one of everything, one orthodontist, one psychiatrist, one chiropodist, but it's more than that, because it's so well integrated. There are hundreds of community groups. You can get a foothold somewhere, even as a disturbing element, as Xavier Herbert would say. Someone's just starting a club for ex-New Zealanders.

Conservative ? The Child Care Association has, in its brief five years, developed two child care centres, two family day care centers, one after-school program, a toy library for the handicapped, a holiday child care program, and is about to introduce a resource team for remote areas.

WEL. Cairns itself is very community-conscious, and we make sure that our public image reflects the fact.

The place is full of southerners. You might have as a neighbour someone you know down south, as I do, and as other neighbours do here. The true Far Northerner is a shy, rare species, Lorraine being our only specimen, unless Lesley decides she's really returning from walkabout. Everyone visits Cairns at some time : it's part of the human life-cycle. Interesting people come to live here. Public servants down south search the ads for years before landing a job. The common herd meets leading politicians and other notables. I myself had in my first flat a strip of blue carpet that the queen had walked on. I didn't actually walk on it of course. I rolled it up and put it in a corner.

*The Pregnancy Termination Control Bill May, 1980—A Chronological Survey*

1974 WEL Cairns makes inquiries about the abortion situation here. Penic from Family Planning silences inquiry for some time.

Opinion polls begin to show a substantial majority in favour of abortion on request.

22.3.79 Lusher anti-abortion motion lost in Federal Parliament in spite of strong Ministerial support. Health Minister blames abortion for declining birth-rate which may endanger economic structure of country.

25.3.79 Cairnsweck street interviews on abortion on request : the women resent being told what to do with their bodies, and the fact that F.N.Q. women have to travel to N.S.W. The men are more backward.

The Queensland abortion law, level with El Salvador's, and a bit ahead of the United Arab Emirates, works like the Menhennit and Lovine rulings, but without the rulings. Legal opinion is that no jury would convict a woman of abortion.

Greenslopes Clinic is now handling a third of Brisbane Children By Choice's referrals, which have totalled 18,000 in its seven years.

- 27.7.79 WEL Cairns is told by a gynaecologist that women's groups should move to get women doctors to start a clinic in Townsville, which could be done with impunity.
- 27.7.79 Ed. Casoy, ALP Opposition leader, M.L.A., Mackay, presents petition against the Brisbane clinics, and supports it. (Don Lane, M.L.A., Lib., Morthyr, has presented one earlier, about the time of Lusher)
- 14.8.79 Five Right to Lifers burst into wainer's Melbourne clinic and occupy it.
- 4.9.79 Bob Gibbs, A.L.P M.L.A. Wolston, presents petitions for reappeal or review of Queensland's abortion laws, and attacks Casoy.
- 5.9.79 Casoy presents second petition against the clinics.
- 14.9.79 David Thomson, M.H.R., Leichhardt, exchanges his male chauvinist views on abortion for *WEL Cairns* female chauvinist ones.
- 14.11.79 Cairns Family Planning pulls out of National womens Advisory Council Far North Queensland regional conference panel of speakers following, though not necessarily because of, rows about the the southern meetings.
- 13.11.79 Minister MacKollar blames abortion for declining birth-rate.
- 17.11.79 Far North Queensland regional conference of N.W.A.C. votes by large majority that. "All methods of fertility regulation, with supporting counselling

services, should be offered to women facing unplanned pregnancies."

25.11.79 A group of Queensland doctors plan to petition State and Federal Parliament for two abortion clinics, one in Brisbane and one in Townsville.

15.1.80 Queensland Health Minister Knox, Lib. (and former Deputy Premier) announces a birth deformity survey following the 245T controversy in F.N.Q. cane country.

17.1.80 Premier Bjolke-Peterson ( N.P. M.L.A. Barambah ) cancels Knox's survey. Anti-abortion legislation foreshadowed in the media.

Fam Simon, WEL N.S.W., rings WEL Cairns to offer help. Negative reply.

7.2.80 Britain's abortion law restricted to the first 20 weeks pregnancy.

6.3.80 Federal Parliament rejects Martyr amendment to Human Rights legial/s. *WEL Cairns* approves the U.S. trimester idea explained in Barry Jones' speech in House of Representatives.

N.W.A.C. National Conference passes fertility regulation regulation as in F-N.Q. meeting.

13.3.80 Vicki Kippin, M.L.A. Mourilyan, and N.P. aspirant to Cabinet, moves the amendmet which delotes Don Lane's abortion reference in Human Rights legislation : "to protect the lives of unborn Queensland children *being killed by abortion*". *WEL Cairns* telegrams Mowbers.

Senate rejects the Harradino "from conception" amendment to Human Rights legislation.

15.3.80 Martin Tonni, N.L. M.L.A. Barron River (includes Cairns outokirts ) tells *WEL Cairns* that survey in his electorate showed a 50/50 rssponse among National Party women for liberal abortion laws. He receives stacks of anti-abortion letters and literature. He

is anti ( "It's murder, of course" ) his wife pro.  
(Voted ter B. II)

- 17.3.80 Ray Jones, ALP M.L.A. Cairns, tells *WEL Cairns* that he also receives stacks of anti-abortion letters and literature. He is anti (on religious grounds) and his wife pro. He believes there are moves towards liberalisation of the abortion law in the Coalition and that Don Lane's "human right's" move was an embarrassment. Believes the legislation may be postponed until after the election.

Spar kes, President of Queensland National Party, rejects the proposed Bill, saying it is a Liberal initiative. Edwards, Liberal Deputy premier, says it is a National Party move.

- 18.3.80 *WEL Cairns* condemns government secrecy and flouting of the public interest. We urge women to make their views known to M.L.A.'s, in two Cairns Post items, and other media.

Cabinet rejects the proposed Bill because it does not contain provision for the sanctity of human life. Knox says he is surprised at the decision. Cabinet's instructions to him last September had been to prepare legislation to restrict abortions to registered hospitals. The draft had been prepared with Justice Minister Lickiss. Cabinet has had the draft since last December. He said that no amount of legislation would prevent abortion. The new measures are unspecified.

- 19.3.80 *WEL Cairns* opposes Vicki Kippin's statement that abortions should be restricted to provide children for adoption, in two Cairns Post items, etc.

- 10.4.80. *WEL Cairns* writes to State and Federal Health Ministers asking if 245T is to be restricted or banned, following news of their concern for the welfare of the unborn child.

- 16.4.80 Rosemary Kyburtz, Liberal M.L.A., Salisbury,



dramatically leaks the proposed legislation from the Coalition combined parties room.

Bjork-P. announces a "no conscience" vote for the Coalition.

- 17.4.80 Sparkes tells the National Party to treat the Bill as a "conscience" issue. Repeats that the Bill is a Liberal initiative.

ALP Kev Hooper, M.L.A. Archerfield, tells anti-abortion demonstrators that they are "broken-down lesbians and man-haters".

- 18.4.80 Queensland Council for Civil Liberties recommends the U.S. trimester law legislation.

- 18.4.80 Continuing strife between Coalition partners on the Bill's origins. *WEL Cairns* complains about persistence with Bill no one will father. Item lost in back pages of C.Post among small ads. An anti-WEL plot?

- 27.4.80 WEL National Conference boycotts Queensland.

- 27.4.10 ALP leader Casey condemns the Bill as having loopholes that would allow abortion on demand.

- 28.4.80 Queensland Council for Civil Liberties says the Bill should be referred to the Law Reform Commission.

- 29.4.80 Bill Howitt, Lid. M.L.A, Greenslopes, refers to the 1974 Inquiry into the Status of Women in Queensland, and recommends that the Solicitor-General consult with the A.M.A.,

Cairns Trades & Labor, Council expresses the T.L.C. stand against the Bill : the decision should be between a woman and her doctor.

- 30.4.80 ALP Health spokesman Bill D'Arcy says the Bill is "an attempt to subjugate women". (M.L.A. Woodridge)

*WEL Cairns* Joan Bleyerveld ( F.N.Q, delegate to N.W.A.C.) tells Scope Cairns and Scope Babinda how the National Conference reflected the Cairns attitude

● on abortion. Both groups pronounce the Bill "very disgraceful".

- 2.5.80 ABC Points North report by Niree Creed, Townsville, shows the striking difference between northern politicians and public opinion.
- 3.5.80 Bill Howitt deplores the lack of community involvement in the Bill. Yvonno McComb, President of the Queensland Liberal Party and Senate candidate, condemns the Bill, urging a White Paper on women's health needs.  
*WEL Cairns* Joan tells the CWA about the N.W.A.C. conference's views on the abortion issue. No comment—they didn't want to know.
- 4.5.80 *WEL Cairns* Pat O'Hara opposes the Bill in her Cairnsweek column.
- 7.5.80 The Australian Women's Weekly survey shows that a substantial majority of Australians, and Queenslanders, are for liberal abortion.  
*WEL Cairns* sends a letter to local women's groups, inviting co-operation, beginning : "WEL Cairns has the honour to be the only women's group in F.N.Q. to have made a public statement against the Bill."
- 8.5.80 *WEL Cairns* gets the offer from Beryl Halmes, Vice-President of Brisbane Children By Choice, as speaker at a public meeting. Luckily, Lesley is on holidays and can do some organizing. Lorraine postpones her holiday to assist.
- 10.5.80 *WEL Cairns* announces Health Minister Knox's refusal to improve front entrance of Community Services Health Centre so that disabled people can use it, and that a letter has been sent to the N.W.A.C. confrence for mothers of disabled children in Brisbane this month.
- 11.5.80 Pat writes up in her column interviews with prominent Liberal back-benchers, Innes and Howitt,

including their reason for opposing the Bill. (Support publicity for WEL Cairns public meeting.)

- 12.5.80 *WEL Cairns* holds a public meeting for concerned citizens against the Bill. Yvonne Carnahan, WEL NCO flies up from Brisbane as an interstate speaker. Chairwoman John Wright, ex-Alderman, member of Consultative Committee on Social Welfare etc. compliments audience on standard of participation. Prominent Liberals attend: Angus Innes, lawyer, MLA Sherwood, and two State election candidates, Evelyn Scott, Manager of Aboriginal Hostels, and N.W.A.C, delegate at-large, and Ald, Dr Digby Hoyal. Both Innes and Hoyal speak against the Bill.

What most impresses about Beryl Holmes is how, accosted by a Right to Life outside the ABC, she gave her half an hour of her undivided attention.

Yvonne leaves us 100 dollars from the QAWC fund.

- 13.5.80 The abortion Bill is given some cosmetic amendments. *WEL Cairns* distributes lots more copies of the Bill, with the existing law, and Beryl Holmes' main points, We write to Ministers, possible swingers and party leaders, telling them of the "huge gap" between the legislators and the people.

We hear that many men have signed petitions for liberal abortion.

- 14.5.80 Cairns Post features a long article on the "big public reaction" over the Bill. Liberal M.L.A. Gygar's analysis is given prominence, with doctors' opinions.
- 15.5.80 Brisbane concerned citizens hold a packed meeting against the Bill. Speakers: Professor of obstetrics and Gynaecology, Anglican priest, barrister and WEL Brisbane member Wyn Metcalf.
- 17.5.80 A register of abnormal births is to start soon, announces Hoyal.

- 18.5.80 *WEL Cairns* Mahgothy Cockburn's long Cairnsweek article analyses the Bill, with added comments.  
6000 anti-abortionists rally in Brisbane, bussed in from all directions. A petition of 40,000 signatures is handed to Bjolko-P.  
Rally of 1000 in Cairns, including Mayar and Martin Tonni in support of the Bill. Chairman : Catholic diocesan chancellor.
- 19.5.80 *WEL Cairns* is told of National Party women and Catholic nurses incensed by the Bill, and the pressure being applied by the church.
- 20.5.80 ALP supporter tells *WEL Cairns* of opposition to Bill by Catholic nurses with experience of wards full of septicaemia patients in the old days." Why should those old men tell me how to run my life ?"  
*WEL Cairns* receives encouraging responses from Liberal Ministers Lee and Doumany.  
Demonstrators arrested outside Parliament as legislation is introduced with amendments incorporated in a new Bill. Government whip Mike Ahorn (MLA Landsborough) tries to explain on Nationwide.  
ALP Bob Scott, MLA Cock, contacted with difficulty on island in huge electorate, flies hastily down to vote against the Bill.  
*WEL Cairns* and *WEL N.C.O.* exchange views about the boycott.
- 21.5.80 *WEL Cairns* phones Ahorn to tell him of NP information that women are afraid to express their opinion against the Bill for fear that their names would go down on a list". He instantly rejects this with "Such an idea is totally repugnant to me ! I myself have no evidence of it !" We ask if we can quote him : he assents and rearranges his statement. He says it is an emotional issue, and that such statements have

been said over and over recently, and he is tired of it. We advise him to dump the Bill, since it is a Crimes Bill and not a Health Bill. The following day we make a news release, to urge women once again to state their views to Members, but time has run out.

The Bill is suddenly changed from a Government to a private Bill, to save the Government the embarrassment of a defeat. It is defeated 40 to 35, with 4 N.P. and 15 Libs. crossing the floor, and Wright, ALP supporting from the opposition. Lib. Deputy-Premier Edwards Right to Life absent, overseas. (Greenwood & Lickiss also cross.)

23.5.80 *WEL Cairns* receives another 100 dollar from QWAC, which we may not need

26.5.80 *WEL Cairns'* letter in C. Post points out the raw deal given to Queensland women especially those in outlying areas, and the continuing hiatus between legislators and public opinion.

Coming up : Health Minister's reply that 245T will not be banned in spite of fears of effects of deformity on unborn children to be publicised by *WEL Cairns*.

## **THE PROSTITUTION BILL OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

On 20. 5. 80. five women were charged with "receiving money" on the basis of statements made by clients who did not appear in court and who were not named.

The history of the prostitution Bill involves police practice, the former Government, the League of women voters and passionate debate about principle.

The present laws against prostitution were framed within the police offences Act., along the lines suggested by the UN Convention on the Traffic in persons ( 1959 ). The league of women voters worked very hard to get South Australian laws in line with the convention, which outlawed the keeping of brothels, prostitutes were not, according to the convention and the police offences Act. to be punished for being prostitutes. Pimps and brothel-keepers were, it is an offence to own, let or keep a brothel, and to receive money in one.

The last clause has been used by the SA police to arrest prostitutes and not to arrest brothel-keepers while Mr. Salisbury was police commissioner it became clear that the police Department could not arrest brothel-keepers while the brothel/claimed to be a massage parlour. and Mr. "forces-of-darkness" Salisbury considered the situation out of hand. He gained permission from the then premier, Mr. Danstan, to send police officers into massage parlours masquerading as clients. If the woman took money from the man, she was arrested for 'receiving money in a brothel'. What is the definition of a brothel ?

A place used for the purpose of prostitution ; the police knew it was a brothel if the woman charged money for sex.

Many women were arrested for receiving money in a brothel, and very few brothel-keepers. According to the original intention of the clauses, no women should have been arrested at all. These arrests paused after the court ruling that the woman had to hold the money in her hand to be convicted of "receiving" it, but they have now stepped up because the police threaten clients with disclosure to their wives or bosses of the fact they have been found in a brothel, and promise silence to the client if he makes a statement against the woman.

Into this came the Select Committee on Prostitution, Mr. Wilson became Chairman of the Select Committee. Its report was tabled earlier this year in Parliament and there have been demonstrations and public statement in favour of the Report as well as against it,

The recommendation of the Report is to "de-criminalize" prostitution in South Australia. As its opponents keep pointing out, prostitution is not a criminal offence in South Australia now : but those women who are arrested by police do not see the fine distinction. Prostitutes are in favour of the Report and gave extensive evidence to the Committee. They want to be free to practise as prostitutes without having to face arrest and possibly gaol.

The Report also recommends that Keeping a brothel should not be an offence. The Bill, proposed by Mr. Robin Millhouse, would not allow brothels in residential areas but would allow them elsewhere subject to Health regulations of local councils, It is this recommendation which has aroused so much opposition.

On the one hand, there are reports of brothel-keepers who do not bring the law on their heads, ready with big sums money to of invest in new brothels the moment the law passes. It has been suggested by the Minister of Health, Mr. Adamson, that if the

Bill passes respectable money will also invest in brothels because they are so profitable.

On the other hand, many women in brothels are paid less than they should be for their work and are sometimes subject to harassment from their boss. Women in brothels can be better off than women working on their own, but they can also be worse off, dependent on their boss as they may be for legal advice, protection from the police and their clients, and anxious to avoid the dangers of working alone.

If there is no offence in working as a prostitute what is the offence in keeping a brothel? The Convention referred to declares that keeping a brothel should be an offence, and is apparently anxious for women to run their own businesses. Many brothels are owned by women, or run by them. When prostitution is illegal, women are arrested for it and have to pay off their fines by working harder; presumably the same thing is true of brothel-keepers? The illegality of prostitution prevents many women from declaring rape or assault to the police, knowing that such a complaint will be ignored or laughed at; the illegality of keeping a brothel presumably means that police protection is not possible except at a price.

The offence of brothel-keeping is of the same kind as that of the capitalist: somebody who, because of her/his capital, can continue to add to profits through the exploitation of another's labour. The other doesn't share in the profits. Society's answer to the capitalist is a union of workers, who through solidarity, can bargain and gain some small percentage of the profits for the workers. Presumably the same principle should work for prostitution organized through brothels rather than in one-woman businesses. Prostitution has all the difficulties of sweated labour, for unionization: it's hard to get workers to band together when it appears that single bargaining will get an individual better conditions. But the criminality of brothel-keeping makes a union of prostitutes impossible to organize.



The de-criminalization of brothel-keeping should make such a union easier to organize. It should allow women to work in one-woman businesses without fear of arrest, either as prostitutes or as brothel keepers. It should take away the one clause in the existing laws which, whatever its intention, is being used to harass and arrest prostitutes. All those are benefits.

It should also allow existing brothel-keepers greater profits, and encourage investors to develop more brothels, with greater facilities for clients. Many of these facilities for women lined up like cattle for the client to choose from, house rules like "no condoms" supervision of women's private lives "to avoid embarrassing clients"—are to the detriment of women. These practices exist now, in some brothels, and the only answer to them is the refusal of women to submit to them which they can only do with support from other workers.

The de-criminalization of prostitution is essential, particularly in a society where the client gets off scot-free. (Nobody has ever suggested that we ought to fine, gaol or punish the client ; certainly the prostitutes don't want it, as such a move would be very bad for business). Anything which stops women from being harassed and arrested by the police is a good thing. As the history of our present laws shows, the police will turn laws from their original intention in order to arrest prostitutes, apparently convinced that evil women, rather than rich clients, are the seat of the problem. The distaste at pimping and brothel-running which many people show (and is a feature of the UN Convention) seems to be a distaste which could be equally directed at the capitalist, but isn't. The notion of someone making money out of a woman's body is OK provided the woman types ; suddenly it is horrific if the woman fucks. It sex-labour is work, why the puritan horror at someone making a profit out of it ? Certainly we want to increase the freedom and control that a woman, employed in a brothel, has over her working conditions and her share of the profits.

PROSTITUTION IS A WOMEN'S ISSUE

*What the law is now*

To be a prostitute, or to have sexual intercourse for money, is not a criminal offence in South Australia. (It is in some countries.) Other things however, such as receiving money in a brothel ; keeping, running or owning a brothel ; soliciting ; living off the earnings of a prostitute ; consorting with a known prostitute—these are criminal offences, and consequently, make prostitution itself virtually illegal.

Receiving money in a brothel was originally intended as a means of preventing the traffic in persons, of catching unscrupulous and exploitative bosses, but its current day usage is very different. Only women are arrested under this clause, and frequently, the police use the 'entrapment' method to secure these arrests. Given its intention, this legislation does not work. In 1978 7 brothel keepers (some of them women) were arrested under the charge of keeping a brothel, while 48 prostitutes were arrested. The most exploitative of bosses, investing in the best security arrangements, are never caught. Catch 22: This legislation does not live up to its promise. All it does is bring woman after woman after woman before the Courts. The bosses await the outcome.

*What's wrong with it ?*

(i) The present legislation discriminates against women. It takes at least two people to engage in sexual intercourse, yet a cursory perusal of police records over the last century shows the constant appearance of only one sex. Again and again, the records show the entry "prostitute". Where are the clients? Deborah McCulloch's letter to the Editor of the Advertiser (29/2/80) suggests "The client walks out the door held open for him by the Vice Squad and goes home to gad". There is a saying amongst Adelaide workers that the police will "help him do up his zip, if necessary. Whatever the reason, it is undeviable that clients seldom come before

the court. and that when they do. they are the young, migrant. or poor ; politicians. sons of Judges or wealthy businessmen do not seem to appear.....

(ii) Keeping, managing and owing brothels are all offences under the police offices Act; again this is intended to catch those profiteers who deal in the exploitation of persons. They, in fact, do no such thing. Because it is an offence under the police offence Act. and because the overheads of constant arrest are high, very few women go into business for themselves. The most successful operators are those who invest large sums of money into their business, devising such security tricks as roofs that pin to their surface any intruding foot, Hence such operators become virtually immune to arrest by the police. They build a small world in which they are the gods, the women their slaves, their clients a potential source of income.

Such bosses employ younger or inexperienced women, supply heroin and other drugs, video tape all transactions between workers and client, and by the combination of blackmail and terror, render the women working for them powerless.

Because receiving money in a brothel is the charge most commonly used against women, and boss can blackmail a woman working for him at any time.

Keeping organised crime out is difficult ; no one knows that better than the police and the prostitutes, and on this issue they are united. The scarlet Alliance is determined that women will not be the means by which organized crime comes to Adelaide, and the only way they will not be is by the de-criminalization of prostitution. As it stands, prostitutes are virtually outside the law, forced to play games of 'catch-me-if-you-can' with the police, unable to go to them for protection, subject to blackmail and exploitation by bosses, powerless to control their own working lives.

De-criminalization would see the beginning of small, women-owned and run businesses as women refuse to have their lives and working conditions dictated to them. Some kind of alliance,

or union solidarity would evolve between women in the industry and they could be a powerful force in keeping out profiteering interests.

It is still a question of power. At the moment men have it, and women don't. Women are punished and their clients are not. Women alone carry the legal censure and social stigma for the transaction in which a man is also involved, and most importantly, men are the bosses and women the workers without rights.

### *Prostitution in our society*

In New York, the hookers organization "SCAPEGOAT". So called because it is women who are made the scapegoats for sexual guilt in our society. Dameed whores and God's police-remember? We cop it either way. And the history of women provides a fascinating profile of the divide and rule theory. Good women join with men in condemning bad women, who are seen to be the cause of unlicensed sex in our society, whereas in fact, any study shows it is those with money (men) who created this endless demand. But it is women who are singled out for blame and women who bear the punishment.

### *Why not abolition?*

One good reason is that it doesn't work. No society, police force or state has managed to totally abolish prostitution, though over the centuries, they have employed an impressive range of tactics and weapons in the attempt.

There is only one group of people who can effectively abolish prostitution and they are the clients. Without the demand, there could be no supply: but how likely is this happen? Men created our morality, and the double standards with it and since they are not en masse, about to simultaneously and all around the state. Cease going to prostitutes, abolition will not work.

Fear of police activity, court sentences, public exposure and humiliation. drive women working as prostitutes further

underground. Already isolated from most people in the community. Support and resources, in times of crackdowns hookers become totally outcast. The only place they can go is the underworld, the only people who will have them are those more criminal than themselves.

Friendless, outcast and powerless. the hooker becomes three times more the victim.

Feminist whatever their personal feelings about prostitution, owe it to the concept of sisterhood, to do everything possible to fight the kind of discrimination and victimization that attempts to abolish prostitution lead to.

### *Why Not Legalization*

There is a good deal of confusion about the difference between de-criminalisation and legalisation. Some lawyers maintaining that 'strictly speaking. There is no difference at all. While that may be true for lawyers, it is certainly not true for women working in the industry. De-criminalisation means the right to determine their own working lives as they please.

Legalisation means one more big 'male boss, the government. Women who have worked in legal in other countries complain that they have even less rights under state owned and run brothels than under the most repressive independent bosses. The card system imposed on women means that are marked for life. The social stigma increases with legalisation, and women as always bear the brunt of it. Wherever they go their card identifies their trade and because they are prostitutes they can be questioned inspected and moved on by authorities at any time' even on a non-working holiday with their children.

Under our present system, hookers have very few rights, under legalisation they are mere chattles. The competition set up by close proximity reintroduces the old criterion of age and beauty, condemning workers to the never-ending routing of keeping oneself beautiful, and the stress caused by the fear of losing looks or growing old.

The card system leaves them marked women, outcasts forever, and public property.

Health checks becomes a final indignity and denial of rights. Workers are inspected more frequently, more thoroughly, under more compulsion than clients, who by and large, still escape unchecked. The S. A. Parliamentary Select Committee declares itself satisfied that workers are not a major cause of Venereal Disease in this State. Most hookers inspect thier clients, use condoms, and have regular checkups. They are the ones who stand to lose business, so they seldom take risks. Legalisation ignores all research into the causes of Veneral Disease and in countries where state-owned brothels operate, the women are the ones inspected, not the clients.

And finally, the French prostitutes point out that to work in Government-run brothels is to become "sex servants without any freedom at all"

### *Why De-Criminalisation ?*

Prostitution in South Austrrlia, was never made, never intended to be, a criminal activity. Laws introduced to cover the fringe activities, were aimed primarily at profiteers and exploitative bosses, and failed to work because the legislation, much less the courts, police and community attitudes, refused to acknowledge women's independent sexual and economic rights. Women became automatically the cause of indiscriminate sexuality, and were punished for the expanding brothel trade.

The only legislation which recognises women's right to control the sale of their sex, and the conditions under which they will do so, is de-criminalisation. At present, the Scarlet Alliance represents a large number of working women in Adelaide, only a small handful of whom are able to publicly engage in the fight for de-criminalisation. Public exposure, family reprisals, police harassment and fear of losing their jobs, keeps most of the women silent.

If any other industry oppressed their workers in this manner,

the public would be outraged. De-criminalisation will accord prostitutes similar basic rights as other citizens and workers.

Women can then choose whether or not to work ; where they will work ; for whom ; which clients they will see ; how much they will charge ; if they are hurt, beaten, raped or threatened, they will be able to claim the protection of the law as other women do or can.

*What About Organised Crime ?*

This is dealt with on the first page. It bears restating however, that organised crime is a male-run world, in which women are only ever the victims and prizes.

Prostitutes side utterly with the police in wanting to keep organised crime at bay, and de-criminalisation is one of the ways of doing it. Women who become prostitutes do so because they need a job and money, not because they are criminals at heart.

*What About Soliciting ?*

Adelaide does not have a large street-walker population as some other cities do, but even so, the question of soliciting arises. It is generally accepted that people do not want to be harassed by hookers making public proposition, but not until the tabling of this report and the consequent legislation, have we seen it acknowledged that women would not have to put up with being solicited in public either.

Under this legislation for the de-criminalisation of prostitution, whatever one's personal feelings about whether or not soliciting should remain an offence, at least it is equal between the sexes.

*What About Living Off The Earnings ?*

Again, this legislation is revolutionary, in that it accepts WOMEN'S equality. Under this legislation, a woman will be able to support her children, members of her family, husband, lover, or any person whom she CHOOSES to support. The

emphasis really is on choice. This legislation provides severe penalties for people living off the earnings of minors, or who attempt to live off any woman by means of force, threat or coercion. It also reverses the onus of proof, a step for which the committee should be highly commended, as it means the woman is no longer the victim when such cases come to court, having to prove that she is being exploited. Under this legislation, it is up to the person doing the exploiting to prove their case.

### *What About Minors ?*

The Scarlet Alliance, in its submission to the Committee, supported the notion that it should be an offence to procure minors for the purposes of prostitution, and that minors should not be freely able to become prostitutes. Experienced prostitutes, like other members of the community, believe that early sexual experiences should not be those of prostitution. There is an enormous difference between an adult woman choosing to become a prostitute, and a young person with little or no previous sexual experience commencing her sexual life as a prostitute.

In principle therefore, we support the legislation concerning minors. We are concerned however, that the penalty for someone under the age of 18 who prostitutes themselves, is five hundred dollars or detention for not more than three months.

Where are minors, particularly those selling their sex for money, going to get five hundred dollars ? And has it not already been well documented that detention at an early age sets a pattern for future behaviour ?

We believe this legislation could be improved. Minors could, for example, be sent by the courts for a three months course in employment training, or transactional analysis. If minors are worth protecting because of their age, then that protection should not run out the moment they transgress.

We oppose the penalising and imprisonment of children.



*What About Brothels ?*

Under this legislation, brothels can be set up in business areas, subject to certain controls, but for those in residential areas, there are severe penalties. While again, this clause is worth supporting in principle, it has severe deficiencies. Namely, that it provides for an owner of the premises to get off by proving that he did not know what the premises were being rented for, but provides no such excuse for the worker. This clause is open to abuse. Workers will carry the brunt of corrupt management, in this case, likely to be owners with enough money and lawyers to build a clever defence.

We do not want to persecute the owner who genuinely does not know, but neither should the worker carry the responsibility. We suggest that the owner/manager, or manager carry the full responsibility for setting up illegal premises, not the workers who simply turn up for their shift.

*This Bill And How To Vote.*

We support in principle and in practice, the de-criminalisation of prostitution in South Australia.

We have the following reservations :

- a. Section 3 of the Bill gives a definition of "public place" which may clearly include a brothel. We believe this is a mistake in the wording, but one which may allow considerable abuse of the principle and intention of the legislation.
- b. Section 4 (1) of the Bill provides penalties for minors engaging prostitution which we believe are unreasonable, out of step with "protective" legislation, and in the long run, ineffectual.
- c. Section 7(1) (b) places responsibility for the setting up of a brothel in a residential area on the workers, instead of the management where we believe it should correctly be (Regardless of whether the management is male or female.)

- d. Section 8 (1) of the Bill, in relation to advertising, prohibits advertising in a "manner or form that is likely to cause offence". That definition is again open to abuse. We prefer the words "in a manner or form that is offensive". The latter falls into line with other pieces of legislation, and can be more clearly defined than the former.

Finally, we strongly support section 10 of the Bill, which calls for a report on the operation of this Act, before the expiration of three years. We believe that such a report may allow prostitutes, police and the Attorney-General to work together to ensure the continuing exclusion of organized crime from South Australia.

## STORIES OF THE FIRST FREEDOM FIGHTERS

### *Suffragettes : Emily Wilding Davison*

Emily Wilding Davison was a B.A. of London University and had first class honours in English Language and Literature at Oxford. She was a tireless worker for the cause of women's suffrage, and had been imprisoned many times. She had experienced the horrors of forcible feeding and on one occasion when she had barricaded herself in her cell against the doctors, she was drenched with a fire hose trained on her window. For someone in a weak state from lack of food and with injuries caused by force feeding, in a prison cell in English weather, this must have indeed been a torture.

She became convinced, according to Emmeline Pankhurst, "...that now, as in days uncivilized, the conscience of the people would awaken only to the sacrifice of a human life."

On June the fourth, 1913, Emily Wilding Davison threw herself under the King's horse in front of his majesty at the Epsom Derby. Mary Richardson describes what happened :

She stood alone there, close to the white-painted rails where the course bends around at Tattenham Corner, she looked absorbed and yet far away from everybody else and seemed to have no interest in what was going on round her.

A minute before the race started she raised a paper of her own or some kind of card before her eyes. I was watching her hand. It did not shake. Even when I heard the

pounding of the horses' hoofs moving closer I saw she was still smiling. And suddenly she slipped under the rail and ran out into the middle of the racecourse. It was all over so quickly. Emily was under the hoofs of one of the horses and seemed to be hurled for some distance across the grass. The horse stumbled sideways and its jockey was thrown from its back. She lay very still." (Neither the jockey nor the horse was injured in the accident.)

To a modern mind, made cynical by our familiarity with death and atrocity of every kind, Emily Davison may seem merely foolish, but there can be no doubt as to the courage and dedication she possessed. Her funeral attracted vast crowds of people, and drew a great deal of attention to the cause for which she died.

Women came to the funeral procession dressed in black and purple, purple and crimson, and white and green, thus incorporating the colours of the WSPU (purple, white and green) into their mourning. Graduates and clergy marched their robes, and trade unionists participated with their banners. Other suffrage societies participated too, and many individuals. The streets were lined with silent crowds, and although the police had actually forbidden the procession, even they showed respect for the martyr of the suffragettes.

## II

### *Lady Constance Lytton*

Constance Georgina Lytton was born in 1869, to Edith Villiers and Robert Lytton, first Earl of Lytton. Robert Lytton was a diplomat, and Constance spent the early part of her life moving from Vienna, to Paris, to Lisbon, to India. When Lord Lytton died in 1891 Constance and her mother, the Countess of Lytton, returned to England in reduced circumstances. The Countess took a post as Lady-in-Waiting to Queen Victoria and then to Queen Alexandra.

In 1905, when Lady Constance was thirty-six, she and her

mother moved to a country house in Knebworth, where Lady Constance lived quietly, partly due to chronic rheumatism and a weak heart.

In 1908 she met Emmeline Pethick Lawrence, who with her husband, had been working devotedly for the cause of women's suffrage. Lady Constance and Mrs. Pethick-Lawrence having a mutual friend in Olive Schreiner, fell easily into conversation, and Lady Constance learned a great deal about the suffragettes. Over the next months she discussed ideology and tactics with many suffragettes, including the leaders of the W.S.P.U. (Women's Social and Political Union). One of these women was Annie Kenney, a Lancashire mill girl who had come to London to work for the cause of votes for women.

Lady Constance Lytton joined the WSPU in 1909 and offered to be part of a deputation to Parliament House. She left her mother's house early on the morning of the appointed day, without telling her, and had the following letter ready should she need it.

"...If you ever see this letter it will mean that after joining the deputation I have been arrested and shall not see you again until I have been to Holloway. For months I have been planning this letter to you, but now that the time has come, it is not any easier to write for that. Of course, my hope has been all along that I should be able to take you into my confidence, that I should have the perhaps undeserved yet heaven-like joy of knowing that though you could not share my views, yet that you would understand why I held them, and granted these, you would further understand my action and the great sacrifice which I know it means to you. My darling Muddy, you will never know, I trust, the pain it is to have to do this thing without your sympathy and help—with, on the contrary, the certainty that it shocks you and hurts you and makes you suffer in numberless ways. Hardly a day has passed but what I have tried to feel my

way with you, tried to convert you—not to my theoretic views difference there does not matter, but to my intended conduct in connection with them. Every day I have failed.

I am no hero, but the thought of other travellers much worse privations on that road will, I believe, fizzle up my flimsy body enough for what is necessary, and if only I knew you were helping me in your heart I should not, could not fail, Muddy darling.....”

Her first experience as an activist must have been a terrifying one for Lady Constance. The severe physical and verbal abuse heaped on the suffragettes was bad enough for the healthiest person, but Lady Constance, being an invalid, found it extremely difficult to even stand up as the deputation made its way through hostile crowds.

She was arrested as a result of her participation in the deputation and was greatly distressed by the preferential treatment given her in prison, not because she was ill, but because she was an aristocrat and ill.

Next time she was imprisoned, the same thing happened, and to circumvent this favourable prejudice, she disguised herself so that she was un-recognizable, and rejoined the WSPU as Jane Warton. She set off to join a WSPU demonstration outside Walton Goal.

She was arrested at this demonstration, for no reason other than she spoke well, and, as a way of getting arrested (the tactic favoured by the WSPU), she dropped some stones, theoretically throwing them. Jane Warton was sentenced to a fortnight's imprisonment with hard labour.

During her time in prison, like the other suffragettes, she adopted a hungerstrike as a protest against unjust imprisonment, and describes the obscene torture of force-feeding, which caused her intense pain, and the humiliation of vomiting all over herself. Lady Constance, as Jane Warton, was force-fed seven times more until her identity was discovered and she was released from prison on “medical grounds”.

She became very ill as a result of her prison experiences, and in 1912 suffered a heart-attack which paralyzed the right side of her body completely. She continued writing, laboriously using her left hand, but she never recovered her health. Lady Constance Lytton died in 1923.

Emmeline Pankhurst at a demonstration of East End Women organized by Sylvia: “..Those women had followed me to the House of Commons. They had defied the police. They were prepared to do something that women had never done before—fight for themselves.

### III

#### *My Great Grandmother's Scrapbook*

The following is reprinted as exactly as possible from newspaper clippings in my great-grandmother's scrapbook. The newspaper is not identified, nor is the date. However, the article suggests that it would have been written around the turn of the century, possibly in the 1890's.

“Seldom has Fate in her use of the ‘abhorred shears’ cut down a life of kindlier promise than when she slit ‘the thinspun life’ of Dagmar Berne, the brightest woman doctor of New South Wales, who died lately in a back-block township amid strangers. On her new made grave, Sydney University authorities laid a wreath of fulsome verbal eulogy, but the true story of their first woman-student would blur eternally the fame of their Medical School. She was literally driven from Sydney to London, not by her brother students, but by the Faculty, led by the ‘Scotch Clique’ which dominates Sydney medically. She became the ‘medal student’ at the famous London Medical School for Women, and passed on to Dublin and Edinburgh. A group photograph was taken at Sydney, before her leaving for England, which shows Miss Berne the one woman amid medical students of her year. Fortythree of the group took diplomas, and the one who was the highest holder during the whole studentship was the girl. The tragedy of her

College course in London was heightend by stoppage, through the Australian bank smashes, of her remittances. For one week, between the arrival of mails, she lived on *eighteen pence* !”

“Dr. Berne returned six years ago to Sydney, but phthisis\* was deeply rooted in her system, gaining its hold on her through the severity of the English winter, in which she served as an assistant to a Kentish...doctor. Among the first to welcome her on her return to her native land was one of the heads of the Varsity Medical School. “I always knew you would win distinction in the profession, he said, suavely. ‘You forget, Professor’, was the calm rejoinder, ‘you, yourself, informed my mother I was too sensitive to become a doctor, as doctors had to be brutes. Upon the latter point you convinced her.”

It was the same official who registered a vow before his High Gods that no woman should ever pass through Sydney ‘Varsity and gain a medical diploma. In her second year he marked down on a paper on the eye ‘woman student’ after the Examiner had pronounced the paper in question ‘the finest ever done in the school.”

\* *Phthisis is pulmonary tuberculosis by Debra Altorfer*



## **SOME USEFUL MEDICAL INFORMATIONS FOR WOMEN**

### **WIDELY USED CONTRACEPTIVE DRUG COMES UNDER SUSPICION**

Serious doubt exist about the safety of a contraceptive drug used in Australian hospitals, family planning clinics and welfare institution.

The drug, Depo-provera, is also used by between three to five million women in developing countries as part of a population control drive funded by Western nations, including Australia. Depo-provera is the trade name of a long-lasting injectable contraceptive which is manufactured by the Upjohn Company, based in Michigan U. S. A.

The company has a branch in Sydney which imports the drug into Australia.

Claims that have been made against Depo-provera include :

- \* That it has caused breast cancer in Beagle dogs after laboratory experiments ;
- \* That it increases the risk of cervical cancer in women ;
- \* That it has caused long-term infertility and possible sterility in many women after they have stopped taking it ;
- \* That it has been associated with .. risk of congenital malformations in women exposed to it during pregnancy, and
- \* That it has been linked to other side effects, such as weight gain, hair loss and severe mental depression.

Drug control authorities in a number of Western nations, including Australia, have refused to grant approval of the

drug as a contraceptive, although it has been registered for use as a treatment for cancer.

But its lack of official sanction as a contraceptive in this country does not stop doctors from prescribing it. In fact, the Health Department has sent a letter to family planning clinics saying they may use it as a contraceptive after obtaining the "informed consent" of the client.

The family planning Association of N. S. W. dispenses Depo-provera on the basis of this letter, although it now has the matter under review.

The association's director, Judy McLean, is sceptical about how the terms of the department's go-ahead can be fulfilled.

"How do you inform people of all the question marks, how do they understand?" She asked.

McLean is opposed to the use of the drug. "While there are question marks about a drug it should never be used. There have been so many disasters".

She said the association was still using it because "this is a medical organisation and it's not necessarily the medical part of this organisation that has expressed concern about it."

McLean said clients were told of the possible dangers of the drug. But she said this was "irrelevant in many cases, particularly when young women who are in the care of the department of Youth and Community affairs turn up at the clinics with a filled prescription for us to inject it."

"People are writing prescriptions for it pretty indiscriminately," she said.

The drug is also used by the family planning Association of Victoria. But the association's training director, Sister K. Dunn, takes a different view from her Sydney counterpart. She said reports on dangers associated with drugs were often taken out of context and that one report had to be balanced against another.

The use of Depo-provera has caused a major outcry in the United States. The National Women's Health network, re-

presenting 1,000 health groups across America, recently set up a national registry for women who had received the drug.

They invited all such women to attach their names to the register and announced that they would assist any women who decided to see her doctor or the manufacturer.

They also wrote letters warning the American Medical Association and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists about the possibility of malpractice suits.

Two women have so far sued their doctors for injuries allegedly sustained as a result of taking the drug. Cancer of the uterus and depression, hair loss, nervous tension and weight gain are the complaints.

It is in the area of the provision of the Depo-provera as a population control method in developing countries that the drug has created the greatest controversy.

Evidence presented in hearing of the U. S. House Select Committee on population last year suggested there were three to five million users in 70 developing countries.

The drug has the approval of the World Health Organisation, although it is understood this will come up for review next month.

Critics say that the overseas programs offer very few safeguards, such as screenings, and that there has been virtually no long-term follow-up.

Pregnancy testing is generally unavailable in remote areas and concern exists that there is a danger of birth defects if Depo-provera is taken during pregnancy.

Advocates say that it offers women contraceptive protection for three to six months with only one shot and is therefore ideal for women in outlying villages in developing countries.

The drug is in wide use in Papua New Guinea where health officials estimated that 10 per cent of all women using contraceptives are using Depo-provera.

There is some evidence that it can be bought over the counter at PNG pharmacies.

A reporter with the Pidgin newspaper Wantok has claimed that she was able to buy it for \$ 5 without a prescription, along with a disposable syringe.

The drug's container carried a warning but according to there porter it was impossible for a non-medical person to understand.

Australia's role in the provision of the drug overseas is indirect. In the last financial year Australia's total budget appropriations for assistance for international population programs was nearly \$ 3 million.

Of this, about \$ 1 million went to the United Nations family Planning Association and the International Planned Parenthood Federation. It is understood that both of these organizations distribute Depo-provera.

In a further article, this time in the *SUNDAY MAIL*, April 27th 1980, we read :

#### U.K. REFUSES ALL CLEAR ON CONTRACEPTIVE NEEDLE

In the face of mounting criticism of the controversial long-term contraceptive injection Depo-Provera, the British Government's drugs watchdog has refused to grant a full licence in the U.K.

The injection, claimed to have some irreversible side-effects has been used in 70 countries, mainly Third World countries for 15 years. It is also fairly widely used in New Zealand.

The latest refusal by the Goverment Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM) is another blow to the 10 years intensive campaign by the drug's manufacturers, Upjohn Ltd., an American-owned Pharmaceutical company to get the drug marketed freely in the U.S. and Britain.....

The Anti-Depo-provera battle seems to be having more success. The campaign was waged under the slogan, "Ban the Jab". Opponents are demanding he banning of the drug and claim that some British doctors are abusing it with prescriptions being too freely available to the lower economic classes.

Depo-provera is a large dose of progestogen, a synthetic hormone normally found in the Pill together with Oestrogen.

It is injected deep into the muscle and is slowly released into the body over three months. Because it is given in one shot, it cannot be recalled and the side-effects are irreversible.

It is the long term side-effects which have given cause for concern to the medical profession in the U. S. and Britain and have limited its use to short term treatment.



# **PART 4**

## **ADDITIONAL ARTICLES**





## **ROLE-PLAYING AND FEMININE PERSONALITY**

*Koyeli Ghosh-Dastidar*

A distinction is often drawn between an individual as a person and an individual as a role-player. Can an individual be a person apart from all the roles he plays, or is it rather the case that a person's behaviour always has both 'personal' and 'role' elements interwoven in it ?

### *The concept of person*

The modern concept of person is often said to have two elements combined within it. The term 'person' can be said to mean (i) the empirical agent or the individual man or woman who is found in every society or culture, and (ii) the autonomous moral agent, who is found mainly in the modern ideology of man and society. While the first element is present in all societies whether traditional or modern, the extent to which the second element can be found in the ideology of any society varies considerably from one to another. The modern concept of person is one that has developed gradually through many centuries. In his essay 'A Category of the Human Mind', Mauss has argued that there has never been a tribe or a language in which the words 'I, me or self' did not exist and did not denote something specific. The rudiments of the modern concept of person, Mauss says, can be seen to be at work in the

language and 'forms of life' of many primitive tribes. Among ancient societies, India and China, Mauss says were the first to become aware of the notion of individual consciousness, but the notion was not subsequently developed thematically or explicitly. The notion of a person as an entity independent of every other being except God developed more explicitly among the Romans, for whom a person was a fundamental fact of law. The Roman notion of a person was further enriched by the Stoics who grew increasingly aware of the distinction between the notion of a role-player and that of a person as such. But the real advance from the former to the latter was actually rendered possible through Christianity, to which the modern concept of person owes its metaphysical foundation. The modern Western concept of the human person, Mauss says, is still basically Christian. It was through Christianity that the transition from the notion of *persona*—man invested with a status—to the notion of man as such, of the person *qua* person was first made.

### *The concept of role*

An important aspect of treating an individual as a person means treating him not as a mere set of roles. Respecting an individual as a person means, so it is said, drawing a distinction between considering him solely under this or that title and considering him as *one who has* that title. Respecting a person as a person does not mean excluding a person's role-performance but seeing him as a person distinct from his role-performance.

The concept of role is said to be useful for various reasons. It provides a means of studying social cooperation. It also provides a bridge between the concept of society and that of the individual. The concept of role is said to operate in that strategic area where individual *behaviour* becomes social *conduct*. Society, though composed of individuals, is not, strictly speaking, reducible to individuals. A society rests on norms and on different kinds of 'constancies of behaviour': it is a complex of

institutionalised modes of action, relationships etc, which have their own identity, continuity and purposes. The concept of role refers not to any concrete, unique individual, but to an individual considered as a 'bundle' of qualities that he is required to demonstrate in various tasks. That which the role-player is expected to contribute to society is constant, while the individual who plays the role himself may vary; the role is only a part that he, one individual or another, is expected to play. The concept of role is thus basically a 'type' concept: the idea of a type that an individual is expected to exhibit is central to the concept of role. Another distinguishing feature of the concept of role is that it always refers to 'purposive' and 'constant' behaviour. The conformity that is demanded by the concept of role is basically a *normative* conformity in the sense that the behaviour of the role-player is determined by what are recognised as social norms. 'Role' is thus basically a normative concept. A person's role is a set of actions that he is expected to perform by following certain rules.

The concept of 'role-distance, the concept with which Goffman has made us so familiar, brings us to the heart of the distinction between a person *qua* person and a person as a role player. Role-distance is a kind of stepping back from the role that a person is playing, a sort of a creation of a gap between the person himself and his role. A role, as has been pointed out earlier, is a *type* concept. Roles are independent of the individual performances and their accompanying variations. The possibility of role-distance arises when an individual performing a role reflects on his role-performance. An individual places himself at a distance from his role, when he, conscious of himself as a performer of this role, ceases to identify himself with the role that he is playing. What the individual is doing here is not to deny the role he is expected to play but to detach himself from his role.

The concept of person, as we have noted earlier, has

developed gradually through many centuries. The history of the development of the concept of person suggest that in its traditional use, there was no sharp antithesis between an individual *qua* person and an individual as a role-player. The concept of role, too, has been gradually picked out in the course of philosophical developments. The concept of person itself can be seen as a role concept, as the gradual development of the concept of man as one who has a particular role to play, namely, the role of human being as such. A person may be seen as one who has this or that role to play and also as one who has to play the role of human being as such. This may be seen as the distinction between person *versus* role and person *as* a role. The concept of role has been gradually picked out as the following questions have been asked : first, what is the function of a person in this or that role, and second, what is the function of a person as such ? The scope of the concept of role remains restricted so long as normative questions revolve around the differentiation of duties that an individual has to carry out as a member of society. The scope is broadened when normative questions are raised about the individual as such. This passing from one question to another has not been abrupt but gradual.

### *Feminine personality*

What can be said about the growth of the concept of feminine personality in traditional Indian society in the back-ground of the previous discussion about persons and roles ?

Traditionally, Indian women have been encouraged to identify themselves with their family. Their primary roles are supposed to be in the family, their security in their family solidarity. Their roles are strictly prescribed, they have many duties and responsibilities (or mores pecifically 'role-responsibilities') to carry out, but very little individual freedom and 'personal responsibility'. The result of all such conditionings is the development of a 'compliant personality.' One too often finds a tendency among Indians to glorify

the traditional ideal of Indian womanhood. As A. Rudra has aptly pointed out, a few names, such as those of Maitreyi and Gargi, are often cited to show how women were respected in ancient Indian society. In Vedic times the position of women in society might have been better than what it was in post-Vedic times. "Pre-Manu India accorded women equality with men in the Vedic sacrifice. At that time women could become priests : there was no immolation of the widow on her husband's funeral pyre (sati), and widows were allowed to remarry." The post-Vedic literature, however, is full of instances of derogatory remarks about feminine selfhood. Of these the most conspicuous are those that refer to the intensity of women's sexual desires. One also finds many instances where women have been very easily accommodated in the lists of various articles of donation.

Alongside the remarks which speak derogatively of the feminine self are those which speak highly of the ideal of wifehood. "For a man suffering from disease, the wife is the best medicine. No friend can be dearer than a wife." Also noteworthy is a certain ambivalence that characterises the Indian male attitude towards womanhood. The Indian woman is seen both as a slave and as a goddess but not as a *person*. She is seen both as subservient to man and as raised to the level of a goddess.

As in most other traditional societies, respecting a woman as a person enjoying equal rights with man is virtually unknown in traditional Indian society. (The only notable exceptions are the Hindu castes of certain Himalayan regions and the Nayers of Kerala ; the system of matrilineal descent and succession and the tradition of polyandry allow both married and unmarried women to enjoy a considerable measure of freedom.) A 'double-standard' of sexual morality, which, in Western countries, was common until recently (and which still persists in some social classes and regions) is quite strong in traditional India. Sexual equality is not uncommon among many Indian tribes as well as

among the lower strata of caste society, but in most higher castes attitudes towards female morality are different from those towards male morality. In traditional Hindu marriage the bride is handed over to the bridegroom as a 'gift', and the bridegroom accepts the gift on the condition that the bride will perform all her wifely duties and be completely subservient to him. A woman is not supposed to have any freedom at any stage of her life : she is supposed to be dependent on her father in the childhood, on her husband in her youth, and on her sons in her old age. Women are supposed to have been created only for the sake of the enjoyment of men. No performance of sacrificial ceremonies and rituals is needed for women so long as they proclaim subservience to their husbands as their supreme virtue.

To see a bride as a 'gift' to be handed over to a bridegroom is too widespread a characteristic of marriage to be pinned down as essentially Indian : in the traditional Western conception of marriage too a wife is seen as a 'property' to be handed over to a husband, as one who should be completely subservient to her husband. The subordination of woman to man is a characteristic not only of the ancient Greek and Roman tradition, but also of the tradition of the Old and New Testament.

Although the traditional Indian social framework tends to discourage personal autonomy and decision in various ways, it does not necessarily undermine self-respect. One's own self does not cease to be valuable to oneself through sheer dependence on external authority. A 'deferential wife' need not lose her self-respect even if she is completely subservient to her husband. Her dignity, so she proudly declares, lies in following her husband. If *dharma* consists in due performance of one's duties and responsibilities fixed by tradition, a person does not lose respect in his own eyes when he shows what will be called a lack of personal autonomy in Western liberal societies. If a person's value to his own self is judged in relation to the network of duties and responsibilities that have been laid down by

tradition, he cannot be said to lose self-respect by performing what, *ex-hypothesi*, he is expected to perform. On the contrary, it is the reverse that is true : a person might cease to have respect in his own eyes, if he failed to conform to the traditional pattern of values.

How is self-respect related to role-playing capacity ? in the Indian tradition not all the duties that an individual is expected to perform are specific duties relating to different social roles. In addition to the specific duties (*varnashamadharm* or *nari-dharma*, for example), there are general duties (*sadharanadharm*). The former set of duties is relative and varies from one individual to another, while the latter is absolute in as much as it does not apply to an individual as a member of this or that particular caste etc., but to any individual *as such*. Compared to relative duties, absolute duties are vaguely outlined, but that does not diminish the importance of absolute duties in guiding the moral conduct of individuals. The epic literature of *Mahabharata*, for example, is one of the most authoritative sources of instruction on absolute duties.

Virtues like non-violence, truthfulness, honesty, retrain from greed and selfishness, kindness etc. are recognised as universal. Making room for duties that an individual has to perform apart from his capacity of playing this or that role is a necessary condition for the recognition of the value of treating a person as a person, if for no other reason than that a recognition of this value implies a recognition of the corresponding, non-role-bound duties.

### *Concluding remarks*

Persons and roles are abstractions when considered apart from each other. A role-performance has both personal and impersonal aspects. A role-performance refers to a situation where 'role' stands for the impersonal aspect and 'performance' stands for the personal aspect. There can be a personal element even in a highly impersonal relation and an impersonal element even

in a highly personal relation. What a role-performance shows is not a rigid separation between the personal and the impersonal elements but a constant interplay between them, the 'role' influencing the 'person' and the 'person' influencing the 'role'.

A person can show himself to be distinct from his roles not only by performing his roles with his own personal style, or by looking at them with detachment, but also by responding to the situation arising out of the conflicting claims demanded by different roles. The scope of role-conflict can vary considerably from one society to another, but it is doubtful whether there is any society so simple as to eliminate all possibilities of role-conflict. The high frequency of moral debates in the epic literature of India indicates that such debates must indeed have been a part of people's lives. There many instances in epic/religious as well as secular literature which show that such moral debates filled the lives of women as well as men. The presence of the conflict between role-duties and universal duties among women indicates that simple role-playing did not characterise the pattern of life of Indian women.



# **DOWRY : A CURSE FOR WOMEN AND SOCIETY**

*Mahasweta Banerjee*

## *Introductory note*

The study of *Dowry System in West Bengal* had been commissioned to the Jayaprakash Institute of Social Change, Calcutta by the Ministry of Social and Women Welfare, New Delhi. Author was over all in-charge of the project and wrote the report. Mr Supriyo Munshi has written the chapter on History of Dowry System in West Bengal.

This study was rather a long and detailed study. Only certain portions of this study is being presented here. For more details refer to the original work called *A Study of Dowry System in West Bengal*.

## *Dowry : A Curse for Women and Society*

Marriage is a basic Institution of Society. It unites two people, a male and a female member of society with the psycho-social sanction to procreate. Generally marriages are functional and provide a solid basis of various relationships. Thus, in a family in India, one often sees three generations of people living together. The grand-parents, the parents and the children. And this system goes on in a cyclical pattern, where the parents become grand-parents and the children become parents of children. In India, even now, one has to marry,

that is, have a social sanction, in order to have children and live happily ever after.

So far the stress has been only on the procreative aspect of marriage. However, marriage does not have only this dimension. Marriage is a multi-dimensional "many splendoured thing." It nurtures the loving bond between two individuals. A mutually sustained, strong, affectionate, understanding, interdependent relationship often helps one to tide over difficulties that one faces else-where in society.

When marriage is meant to fulfil these functions, coupled with others, one wonders, how the Dowry system, with all its negative connotations came into existence? In order to understand that, let us first try to understand what is meant by Dowry. Dowry means whatever, i.e. any gifts in cash or kind, that the bride takes with her when she goes to her husband's house. The English or Christian equivalent of the word "Dowry" is perhaps the bride's trousseau; the Hindu equivalent is "Stree Dhanam".

Marriage has always meant a transfer of residence for the bride. So in order to settle down in her new home, she was given by her parents, the things that she valued, so that they would help her to settle down in that new environment. Along with gifts for the bride, gifts were also given to the groom and his parents and relatives. Originally, these gifts were basically what the bride needed in her new set up and its value was dependent on her parents ability to give. Under "normal" (here the stress is on the word normal) circumstances, this dowry that the bride takes with her should not create any problems for any party concerned, viz. the bride and the groom, the bride's parents and the groom's parents. Sadly however, with the passage of time, the word dowry started to take on hideous connotations. And its reflections are showing everywhere—and Marriage as an Institution is on the verge of cracking-up. If anomie seems to be the underlying theme of Society today, dowry provides an accelerating function.

So the point here is, that dowry may have started with positive implications, and may also continue to have positive implications in some cases, however, for the vast majority of the Indian population it is increasingly becoming a formidable social evil. Today parents are finding it extremely difficult to find suitable grooms for their daughters, who are willing to marry their daughters for the dowry/gifts that the parents of the girl can comfortably give. Thus, in most of the cases a certain amount of cash/kind is demanded by the grooms' side, as a precondition of marriage and only when the stated demand has been met the marriage takes place. Sometimes, however, marriages take place on the understanding that more dowry will follow.

The difficulties or problems do not end there, infact, they often start here. The bride feels forced to live with a husband and in-laws, who persistently create difficulties for her either for not bringing in adequate dowry or by demanding more dowry.

This sometimes forms the root of marital conflict in India. In the West the un-resolved marital conflict often lead to divorce or separation. Here, at our home ground, the story is somewhat different. Many carry on as husband and wife, inspite of the conflict. A handful seek divorce. Some are forced to commit suicide. The rest may even be murdered, for non-fulfilment of the promise made by the parents.

Murdered for not bringing in adequate dowry ? Shocking ! It may shock a Westerner, but it no longer shocks us, Indians. Dowry deaths have become quite a regular feature in the Newspapers these days. At the beginning one used to read with shock and disbelief that a thing like this could happen. One hoped and prayed that the culprits would be eventually punished at the Courts of Law. However, often due to lack of evidence and even negative evidence these deaths cannot be proved so the culprits go scot-free. This seems to have emboldened and encouraged others to kill. And kill whom ?

The bride, who then becomes, so it seems, a criminal for not bringing in adequate dowry, i.e, a criminal, for no fault of her own.

The fact that not bringing in adequate dowry could be a crime, an offense, seems to have provoked a lot of people into action against the Dowry system. Many regard dowry as a "recent problem"—however, what does this word 'recent' connote ? For in 1961 i.e. 24 years back, from date, a legislation had been passed, namely, The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 prohibiting the giving and taking of dowry which was punishable by law. Thus if a law had been passed as early as 1961 the problems of dowry must have existed even before that. For unless a problem exists a law would not have been passed prohibiting it. So, the point here is that Dowry problem had been existing since a long time but that the problem has progressively become more draconic.

Studies have shown that dowry problems and dowry deaths are on the increase all over India. Prof. Gandrade's Study on *Evils of Dowry* corroborates this fact.

Home Ministry report shows that the problem is most acute in the states of Haryana, Punjab and Saurashtra region of Gujarat. Death of women due to burns, in the country totalled 5245 between 1975-78.

The report also shows that per day, on an average, one woman is burnt to death in Delhi. The Delhi administration's report for 1980 reveals that women account for 65% of the total number of deaths due to burns. Of course, all the dowry deaths do not result in burning alone. There are cases of strangulation, poisoning, injury inflicted by heavy weapon, falling down from high places as a result of being pushed to death, being compelled to commit suicide, etc.

Latest statistics available reveal that in the year 1983, in Calcutta alone, 16 brides were murdered for dowry and 50 women committed suicide or died under suspicious circumstances.

Another report published in a local Bengali Magazine, *Paribartan*, reveals the following data :

Incidence of death related to dowry in India during January—June, 1982.

MURDER		SUICIDE	
Uttar Pradesh	438	Madras	88
Maharashtra	332	Delhi	72
Bihar	120	Bombay	42
Other states	910	Calcutta	28
		Other states	2115
All India Total :	2800	All India Total :	2345

Thus, in India, it is a universal truth, today, that the word 'Dowry' has taken on a very negatively loaded connotation and assumed the rank of a near 'stigma'. Truly it is a corrupt form of social custom related to marriage, a social monster, that has been ruining thousands of families and gobbling up hundreds of young women all over the country every year. Yet, marriages, happy or unhappy continue to take place—and dowry whether demanded or given willingly continues to accompany a newly-wed bride to her new home. To a vast majority of Indians it is unthinkable that a bride can go to her husband's home after marriage, without taking anything with her from her parents' home. Hence, dowry continues to be a part and parcel of our lives here in India.

#### THE HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE DOWRY SYSTEM IN WEST BENGAL

##### *Evolution : both historical and near past*

In ancient times when man had to fight against various odds for survival, the son was preferred to daughters for his fighting values and as such the birth of a daughter was an unwelcome

event. The societies at that time were usually patriarchal. The primitive man, however, did not have the farsight of women having potential fighting values by giving birth to sons and thus contributing indirectly to the fighting strength and efficiency of the community (Dr. A. S. Altekar : *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation*).

Both in the later *Vedic* period and *Indo-Iranian Age* this practice to look down upon women continued. The Atharva Veda contains such reference (III, 23 ; VI, II). However, during the *Upanishadic Age* (Vedantic also) the situation changed to a certain extent. In lower sections, however, after the coming of the *Bride-Price* system particularly, the birth of a daughter must have been a welcome event. In any case, marriage of a daughter was not a difficult problem in this period.

But as time passed on, the above circumstances gradually changed. With the advent of the *Christian Era* (c. 200 A.D.). Child marriage came into vogue and levirate (Niyoga), remarriage and widow-marriage etc., were prohibited.

Inter caste marriages began to be disapproved by the society including marriage in *Sagotra* (same clan) and there came into existence hundreds of sub-castes and insistence upon mutual exogamy. The field of choice thus became very narrow for the selection of a suitable son-in-law, intensifying thereby the anxiety of the daughter's father or guardian about the selection of a proper bride-groom. Again a girl of 10/12 or even below was incapable of exercising any choice worth the name and for this also the whole responsibility gradually fell on the father or the guardian, and as we find even to-day, the Hindu father has always tried to discharge this responsibility with proverbial solicitude. In order to secure a match or a desirable bridegroom he spends much or is prepared to spend an amount often beyond his capacity.

Dowry system, therefore, was generally unknown in early societies before the Christian Era. One reason was that women were looked upon as 'chattel' (movable property) in pre-

historic times and so it was the bride's father who could demand a payment at the time of the marriage. The bride—groom carried away the 'property' and thus could not demand further *donation* or *dowry*. We of course come across references where gifts have been given to the son-in-law at the time of the marriage, but these were just presents. Only in *Atharva Veda* there is a reference to 'dowry' of hundred cows being brought by royal brides at the time of marriage—"nasya jaya Satabahi Kalyani talpamasaye" (V. 17, 12). In *Rig Veda* also there is a reference to dowry. *Jatakas* (rich merchants like the father or Visakha gave valuable presents at the time of the marriage of their daughters) *Raghu Vansa* (VII, 32 : king of Vidarbha sent handsome presents with his sister Indumati at the time of her departure to the father-in law's place after her marriage) also refer to brides bringing in rich presents, but these would not be regarded or treated as *dowry* as they were referred as presents made out of pure affection.

There are no reference in *Smiritis* or in *Puranas* to the 'dowry', i.e. to a prenuptial contract of payment between the bride's father or guardian and the bride-groom or his father/guardian. Otherwise the Smiriti writers would have condemned these definitely like their condemnation of *Bride-price*. They also recommended giving suitable ornaments, but their number and price were left entirely to the discretion of the bride's father, etc.

In *Manusmriti* there is one verse which refers to the daughter being covered with valuable clothes and *decorated* with ornaments at the time of the marriage and given over to a chosen groom so invited : "Achhadya charchaitive chasrutasilabate Swayam/Ahua danain Kanyaya Brahma Dharma prakirtita."

This has been mentioned while describing different forms of marriages in vogue during the early periods. Altogether eight (8) forms have been mentioned of which *Manu* preferred the *Brahma* form which enjoined the daughter being covered with valuable clothes and bedecked with ornaments, etc.

That dowry was not much known in early times can also be evident from the numerous writings and editorials of some papers published in and around Calcutta during the middle and later part of the nineteenth century. In an editorial on *Kanya-daya* (liability for a daughter) *Som Prakash* writes that such practice was not in vogue can be evident from the writings of the *Sastrakaras* (Law makers). The writer of the *Smiritis* have mentioned eight forms of marriages but no where is it written that the father of the daughter would have to spend beyond his means. He could give ornaments etc., only within his means.

In the *Mangal Kavyas*, where reflections of the social conditions and attitudes of Bengal of a certain period are found, no reference has been made about the dowry proper, Dr. R. C. Mazumder, the famous historian, has observed in his book *The History of Bengal* (in Bengali)—“In one sense the system of marriage in the Middle Ages was different from that of the present age. Now the father of daughter pays *Dowry* to the bride-groom, then the father of the bridegroom paid *bride-price*. Among the lower-castes this system of bride-price still exists but gradually dowry has come to stay”.

The situation, however, is found altogether changed from the later part of the last century regarding acceptance of dowry and it went up to such an alarming state that it almost spelt ruin for the bride's parents and family as well. This has been well brought out by Rabindranath in one of his early short stories *Dena Powna* published in 1298 Bengali year (around ninety two years back from to-day). Dr. A. S. Altekar in his book *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilisation*, (re-published in 1956 and revised) observed, “It is only during the last 50 or 60 years that the amount of dowry has began to assume scandalous proportions”. He then went on to spell out certain reasons for this.

We of course come across references to the acceptance of dowry in the early part of the last century, but these must have been stray cases.



In a latter of 1231 Bengali year (1823 A.D) a marriage was settled on a dowry of three hundred nineteen rupees (Rs. 319) which in to day's value must be running into lakhs, if not more. The situation we face in latter years however, is disturbing and in an editorial the *Som Prakash* writes that "the demand of dowry has assumed such a serious propotion that the birth of daughter is looked upon as dangerous" (around 28th May, 1871 A.D.) and in a letter published in the same journal of around 22nd May, 1870 A.D. and in another editorial of 1982 A.D. it is mentioned that if not like the practice of 'Infanticide in Oudh' people desired the death of the female child as soon as it was born, although hearsay speaks that sometimes new-born female-child was killed in the Labour-room. The reasons for this, as suggested in the last editorial, were (1) unjust greed of the bride-groom's father or the guardian and (2) the desire of the Bride's father to marry his daughter to a high-caste family to preserve his ancestral tradition (behind the practice of Infanticide in Oudh both these suggestions could be marked), although, as borne out by another editorial of the *Som Prakash*, Pandit Iswarchandra Vidyasagar, the celebrated scholar, educationist, social reformer, philanthropist and author, thought that the main reason behind the cursed dowry system was the *Kaulinya Pratha* or the system of Kullinya or Kulin, roughly the preservation of certain traits and tradition by high castes like Brahmins and Kayasthas, etc.

As records and hearsay speak, Adisura, the king of Bengal (his name in not found in historical records), brought from Kanyakubja or Kanauj, five Brahmins to improve the standard and qualities of the Brahmins of Bengal in 1077 A.D. At first they had little contacts with local Brahmins. But as days passed they intermingled with the local Brahmins losing their qualities thereby and Ballal Sen, the king of Bengal, to raise their qualities, directed them to observe nine qualities : Achara/ Binoyo Vidya Pratistha Tirthadarshani/Nistha Brittistapo Dananon Nabadha Kulalakshanam" and from this evolved the.

system of 'Kaulinya' or preservation of certain qualities of a high caste. However, although he divided the high castes according to their qualities, Ballal Sen did not restrict marriage among different high castes. The marriage then was known as 'Sarbadwari', i.e. among all roughly.

But after some hundred years after Ballal Sen Debidar Ghatak reclassified the high castes and evolved a system (*Mel-bandhan*) to preserve the qualities of different Houses/Titles or sects thereby limiting the scope of marriage. Thus this 'Kulinpratha' or the system of preserving the qualities and traditions of particular house/Title/or sect gradually became a cause of great fright and consternation and in the name of preserving the qualities and traditions of a particular House, the caste-proud persons started marrying realising huge amount of dowries and parents of the daughters, afraid of becoming out castes or ostracised, staked all and ruined themselves sometimes to marry their daughters out. The marriage thus become an easy means for earning which ultimately influenced the other castes. The report submitted by the enquiry committee instituted by Sir Cicil Beadon. Lt. Governor of Bengal, to enquire into the situations created by the custom of 'polygamy' states at one place—"Families, it is said, are ruined in order to provide the large sums requisite to give as consideration on the occasion of their marriages.....it is said, are contracted simply in order to obtain this consideration, and the husbands do not care to inquire what becomes of their wives". (*The Society and Culture of the Nineteenth Century* (in Bengali) by Amitava Mukhopadhyay, p. 39)

Iswar chandra Vidyasagar highly condemned the introducers of this system : Ballal sen, the famous Sen King of Bengal, and particularly Debibar Ghatak, who after some hundred years after Ballal Sen recast the marriage system among the high castes. He observed "If there is God Debibar Ghatak has definitely gone to the Hell." The practice of 'polygamy' which contributed greatly towards bringing the dowry system into

such a scandalous proportion, as borne out by a single case of one Rasbehari Mukhopadhyay of Ariadaha, 24 Parganas, who was married thrice by his uncle within his age of eight for money, was also a direct outcome of this 'Kaulinya Pratha' or system. Rasbehari tried to initiate a social movement against this in latter years.

The enquiry committee report, earlier referred to, further states that "polygamy is said to have been resorted to as a sole means of livelihood by many koolins" (The Society and Culture of the Nineteenth Century).

Among the Muslims, accepting dowry at the time of marriage was forbidden, but now we find even them placing demands at the time of marriage (*The History of Marriage in India* by Atul Sur). Among the tribal populations, till to day to a great extent, there is no custom for accepting dowry, although bride-price is generally prevalent (Atul Sur : *The History of Marriage in India*). The Christians have altogether a different custom.

We have already stated that child marriage also contributed towards evolution of the dowry system. Charuchandra Biswas in his book *Kanyadaya ba Hindu Bibaha Samskar* (Liability for a daughter or Hindu Marriage Reforms—in Bengali), published in 1317, Bengali year, roughly 1910 A.D., observes that this system has a greater connection with the dowry system. In child marriage the independent wills of the couples could not be exercised and as such the main driving force in this system is extraneous interest rather than conjugal love, etc. For this we find that now a days money becomes the main consideration mostly at the time of the marriage or the parents of the bride groom accept that bride whose parents/guardians pay the highest dowry.

Charuchandra Biswas has further cited in his book the absence of women's education as another reason for the cursed dowry system. Although situation in this area has much changed at present, we come across enough instances in which the

parents of educated and employed daughters had to pay dowries at the time of their marriages and they had been subjected to various kinds of torture for non-payment of full and expected dowries, including death.

To this added another dimension when the Western system of education was introduced. Those who obtained English education or acquired degrees became much sought after bridegrooms and the demands and expectations of their parents naturally went up although people expected that the introduction of the Western system of education, so-called liberal, would bring down the rates and incidents of dowry demands, if not altogether eradicate the unjust and unkind system. The situation at this period was so lucrative or severe that male children were looked upon as 'Company-Papers' or 'Shares' and the *Som Prakash* published an editorial (around 25th June, 1884 A.D.) which was entitled 'Sale of sons in Bangladesh' (Bengali).

Two instances of severe dowry demands can be cited here, prevalent among two very rich communities of Calcutta. In an editorial, referred to earlier, the *Som Prakash* writes that among the Subarna-Banik families even the poorest would have to give atleast 50 bharis (600 grams) of gold as dowry at the time of the daughter's marriage and among the Basaks the minimum "dowry" was two thousand rupees at a time when the value of the rupee was hundred time greater. These communities were mainly traders and money lenders. (*Som Prakash*, around 22nd May, 1872 A.D.)

The dowry system has also been connected with the conception of marriage as dana or gift. A religious gift in kind is usually accompanied by a gift in cash or gold. So the gift of the Bride (Kanyadana) was also accompanied by formal gift in cash and ornaments, etc. Earlier the amount of this gift was a nominal one usually and did not create much impediment in the settlement of marriages. But as has already been pointed out, during the last eighty years or so the amount of dowry has begun to assume scandalous proportions. Addition of con-

sumer and luxury articles, however, is rather a recent trend. A good education, a lucrative appointment, a good footing in a learned profession or owner of landed property, improved enormously the social and economic position of a youth, and made him immensely attractive as son-in-law. He naturally acquired a high-price in the marriage market (Dr. Altekar). Extreme and extraneous sense of social status, social security and competition coupled with other pro-urbo-industrial factors and conventions and western education has brought about this intolerable and forced situation. There were hardly any such factors during the pre-British period when society was mostly agricultural (Dr. Altekar).

#### *Movements against*

It is astonishing to note however that even when the dowry system acquired a scandalous and oppressive character in the later part of the last century or early part of the present century, the movement to put this down never gained much momentum. Records, in this respect, are also very scratchy. The society almost acquiesced to it excepting stray cases of editorials and letters in journals or reference in short stories or novels and very few social movements like attempts to create public opinion against the dowry system through meetings, etc. One reason may be that in the Hindu Society, marriage of a daughter was compulsory and superstition and convention attached to the custom and unusual greed of a certain sections of people to utilise social situations for personal interests discouraged a sustained movement against this reproachable system.

Earlier writings like the Smritis and Puranas etc. have said very little against the dowry system although they were very severe in condemning the system of Bride price (Dr. Altekar) Iswarchandra Vidyasagar though did not directly attack the dowry system, tried to create much public opinion against the system of polygamy which contributed immensely to bring the dowry system up to this intolerable situation, and even submit-

ed a memorandum to the then British Government for passing a Bill forbidding this but the alien Government did not think it prudent to interfere further in the religious and social customs of the Natives due to the Sepoy Mutiny. References are found about further public efforts to bring down this custom and about ninety eight years back (1239 Bengali year) a movement was launched in Saptagram in the district of Hooghly against the demand of dowries and a committee was formed which decided that only ornaments up to one's capacity could be given/accepted at the, time of the marriages. Many agreed to the proposals, even by signing, but started accepting company papers, shares etc. instead.

Around sixty eight to sixty nine years back (roughly 1915/16 a public meeting was convened at Baharampur in Murshidabad District under the presidentship of Maharaja Manindrachandra Nandi of Lalgola, a famous zamindar and philanthropist, to express public concern against the system and although much concern was shown and a stress on women's education was advocated we do not find much tangible outcome from such public meetings. We have already referred to the efforts of one Resbehari Mukhopadhyay also, but, though these stray references prove a public consciousness about the dangers of this evil system, the incidence gradually increased. The effort of the zamindar of Meltigram in the Diamond Harbour sub-division, Srijukta Kailashchandra Deb to discourage acceptance of dowry is very interesting and praise-worthy, though very rare, as published in the *Dainik Hitabadi* in one of its issues of 1st Sravana, 1317 Bengali year (roughly mid-july, 1910 A.D.). The news was titled as 'An Ideal Example' and narrated that while fixing his son's marriage with the daughter of Srijukta Rajjaganeswar Mitra, Sri Deb informed the bride's father that he would not demand any dowry, but in exchange Srijukta Mitra would have to pledge in the name of God that he would not demand anything at the time of the marriages of his three sons and even to extort from the would be father in-law of his sons

such similar pledges. The *Vidya Darshan* and the *Som Prakash*, two important journals of the mid-nineteenth century onwards wrote incisive editorials against this custom and published letters and appeals. In one editorial (around 25th June, 1884 A.D.) the *Som Prakash* equated the acceptance of dowry as sale of sons and referred to the slave-trade as practised earlier in Africa, Egypt and Turkey, in this connection. Describing the system as heart-rending it advocated a reform movement and suggested a strong action including ostracisation. It then published a long poem by one Rupchand Das, a native poet (Kabiwala), better known to his contemporaries as 'Rupchand Pakshi', which brought out in an incisive detail the whole situation including the evolution of this system and its gradual transformation into a more coercive and oppressive system and the extent of the oppression and its exploitation for easy gains, etc, by vested interests. The *Samachar Darpan* another Bengali journal of this time, also published many articles and letters against this custom. In a letter, published in this journal dated 21st March, 1835 some ladies of Chinsurah, District Hoogly appealed for abolition of this dowry system.

This incomprehensible social acquiescence had its reflections in the contemporary literature also and excepting in some early writings of Rabindranath like his short story *Dena Powna* already mentioned and Saratchandra's novels, *Arakshania* (girl who should not be kept unmarried any longer) on *Palli Samaj* and the great dramatist Girishchandra Ghosh's social drama *Balidan* (Sacrifice) or the booklet *Kanyakaya ba Hindu Bibaha Samskar* by Charuchandra Biswas or stray reference in *Narir Ukti* by Indiradebi Choudhurani, the eminent niece of Rabindranath, and stray essays published in different journal like one on 'Dowry system in the Hindu Marriage' (in Bengali) by Kusumkumari Debi published in the *Bharat Barsha* (Kartick, 1322 Bengali year) we do not find much protests through such an effective medium.

After perusing the materials one could lay hand upon it

seems that dowry in the present form was a creation of a certain section of the elite class and middle class intelligensia and during Rammohan-Vidyasagar's time it did not assume so much dimension as to draw their particular attention and make it imperative for them to start movements against this like other social evils. Even in the novel *Kankabati*, written in the early nineteenth century by the famous novelist Trailokyanath Mukhopadhyay, the acceptance of 'Bride-Price' has been portrayed.

However, the materials reveal a redeeming aspect also. Be it because they thought themselves the monitors of the society or out of some guilty conscience it was the elite class who tried to oppose this custom and initiated both literary and social movements against it. But how their attempts at social reformation had been thwarted sometimes by the ladies themselves could be borne out by Sarala Debi's (Rabindranath's elder sister) speech at the Congress Session of 1909 (as reported in Charuchandra Biswas's book in Bengali, *K nyadaya ba Hindu Bibaha Sam:skar*) or by the cartoon drawn by the famous artist Gaganendra Nath Tagore in 1920 depicting the mother thinking of re-marriage of her son and receiving dowry and other gifts, while the dead body of her first daughter-in-law was lying near her.

#### CONCLUSIONS, INTERPRETATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

First of all, a brief account of the Research Universe will be presented ; it will then be followed by Findings, Interpretations and Recommendations.

In all, 215 respondents were interviewed for the purpose of this study. Out of this 275 respondents 88% were willing to give their names, while 12% preferred to remain anonymous for various personal reasons. The main reason, however, was fear of what may come, because of giving the interview. The above mentioned fear was also perhaps rooted in the fact that there is a lot of publicity, via the mass media, regarding the negative



aspects of dowry. *Some refused to be interviewed*, for the same reason, as also perhaps they did not wish to be identified as "one with a dowry problem".

58% of the respondents were from *urban West Bengal*; remaining 42% were from *rural areas* of West Bengal. 54% of the interviewees were *females* and 46% were *males*. Majority of those interviewed were middle-aged or elderly. 15% were between the age-range of 15-25 years 28% were between 26-35 years of age.

In keeping with national statistics, majority of the respondents were *Hindus* 60% followed by *Muslims* 26% and then *Christians* 14%. Most of the *Hindus* interviewed happened to be *Caste Hindus* (44%); Only 16% were *Sudras* (Low-caste *Hindus*).

61% of the interviewees were originally from *West Bengal*. 24% were originally from *East Bengal* (now Bangladesh) and 15% were originally from *other states of India*, residing in *West Bengal* for over a decade.

14% of the respondents were *Illiterate*. The rest were *literate*. Of this 13.1% had primary school education; 21.5% were non-matriculates; 9.8% were *Matriculates*; 6.5% were non-graduates; 15.6% were *graduates*; 17.1% had post-graduate degrees and 2.2% had professional qualifications.

54% or majority of the interviewees being women, the highest percent 21.8% were *Housewives*. 16% respondents were engaged in *Business* or were self-employed and 15.3% belonged to the proverbial Indian "Service Class". The rest had various other occupations.

Respondents from various *Socio-economic strata* were purposefully interviewed. thus 37.1% were from the lower-middle class; 40% were from the middle class; 21.8% were from the upper-middle class and only 1.1% were from the upper strata of society.

Majority of the interviewees were *Married* 76.7%; 7.6% were *Widow* and 2.9% were *Separated*, thus bringing the total

of married respondents in the context of dowry, to 87.2% ; 12.8% were single.

*Findings of the Study*

1. It was unanimously agreed that *Dowry constituted of* :
  - a. any gifts in cash or kind, given unwillingly by the bride's parents to the groom and or his parents.
  - b. any cash that is taken by the groom and or his parents as a condition of marriage.
  - c. any gifts (cash or kind) that is extorted from the bride's parents by the groom and or his parents.

Some felt that, any gifts be it cash or kind, given willingly by the bride's parents to the bride and or her husband or in-laws does not constitute dowry. A minority disagreed with the above opinion, for they opined that gifts given willingly to the bride and or the groom also constitute dowry. Their rationale for the above mentioned statement was that very few people in India can really afford to give what they apparently give willingly ; they give as there is a subconscious duress to give.

2. If we accept the later view to be true, i.e. any gifts whether in cash or kind given willingly to the bride and or her husband/in-laws to constitute dowry as well, then, cent percent of all our respondents had obtained a dowry for their marriages. However, if the above category is to be excluded from the domain of Dowry, then 54.5% of the total number of respondents did not take dowry for their marriage. The rest 45.5% had been given a dowry as it had been demanded.

3. Dowry, whether given willingly or unwillingly, never comprised of cash alone. When demanded, it generally consisted of cash and kind. When given willingly, dowry was mainly in the form of kind.

4. The amount of *cash dowry* varied widely among the various socio-economic groups. It ranged between Rs. 300 one end of the scale to Rs. 25,000+ on the other end.

5. Dowry and or gifts given willingly in kind can be broadly

divided into two main categories : (a) *Jewellery* (b) *Consumer Durables*. In the category of jewellery, gold ornaments were valued most and demanded/given, both for the bride and the groom. Jewellery made with other precious stones, e.g. diamond, ruby, emerald, etc. were of secondary importance. The minimum gold ornaments that were expected, consisted, at least of a gold or gold-plated chain, a pair of ear-rings, bangles for the bride. Buttons and rings made with gold or gold plating, were sometimes expected for the groom. On the other hand, on the expensive side, the amount of gold jewellery went up to the amount of 50-100 Tolas.

Consumer durables consisted mainly of bedding, utensils, clothes and or wrist-watch, cycle, transistor for rural/urban, lower socio-economic group of respondents. In the middle and upper middle classes, consumer goods were mainly in the form of bed-room furniture, with its accompanied frillings, drawing and dining room furniture, T.V., Fridge, clothes, utensils etc. Occasionally a car or some other form of vehicle, a house or land was also included in this category.

Among the upper class, cash dowry was generally more common. Business contracts and deals were also equally important. Consumer durables were of less significance as they already possessed all or most of the items listed in the category of consumer durables.

In one case, getting a job for the groom by the father-in-law, was a pre-condition of a marriage.

6. Dowry or trousseau is given and or taken *among all religious groups* studied—Hindus, Muslims and Christians alike. It was obviously more prevalent among the Hindus. Practice of dowry by non-Hindus can possibly be attributed to two causes (1) hinduization of non-Hindus as a result of close societal contact (2) Practice of pre-conversion social customs by non-Hindus.

7. Dowry is *prevalent equally among all the castes* of all the religious groups studied.

8. *The amount of dowry, however, varies among the various communities.* It is very high among the Keralites, Marwaris, Gujratis and U.P.ites interviewed, who have been residing in West Bengal over a decade. The amount of dowry was relatively low among the Bengalees, in comparison to the above mentioned communities.

9. Both the poor and the rich (even those with income much above Rs. 10,000 per month) feel the pinch of dowry.

10. Dowry, i.e. any gifts given unwillingly or as a condition of marriage, was more prevalent among the rural respondents, than among the urban respondents.

11. Among the urban, lower-middle class respondents, dowry vis-a-vis the above connotation was prevalent.

12. As majority of the respondents happened to be from educated middle-class, urban back-grounds, dowry had not been demanded for majority of our respondents. However, an unspoken expectation was there to give and receive dowry.

13. The total expenditure incurred in a marriage, again, varied widely, depending to a large extent, on the socio-economic background of our respondents.

With the exception of a few young idealistic individuals, most of the marriages were on the expensive side, taking their socio-economic background into account.

14. Although both male and female children were wanted almost equally by majority of the parents interviewed, sex discrimination was present among most of them, wherein, they wanted their daughters to get married and settle down ; whereas, boys were expected to get educated and have a career.

15. In this connection it was found that all the brides were younger than their husbands, less educated than them and earning less than their husbands, if at all they were earning, for majority of the brides were housewives. 17% (among 200-respondents) of the brides continued to depend on their parents financially, even after marriage .

16. Majority of the respondents (86%) would give dowry/ gifts for their daughter's marriage. However, only a minority (8%) said that they would demand a dowry for their son's marriage. The rest felt that they would accept any gifts that are given to the bride or her groom, willingly at the time of marriage, by the brides parents.

17. There is a positive correlation between the amount of dowry to be given and the prospective groom's capabilities, in terms of education, income, property, social status, looks and moral character. There was no fixed rate for a groom of any particular background. However, professionals e.g. Doctors, Engineers, Lawyers, Accountants were preferred to the IAS, IFS, IPS grooms, as the former held higher earning potential in comparison to the latter. The middle-class respondents preferred educated professionals. The lower-middle and upper class interviewees gave more importance to the groom's income, rather than to his educational background.

Further, it was found that it was more difficult to get a less accomplished and not so good-looking girl married, than her more accomplished fair-complexioned counter-part. The respondents belonging to the older generation did not consider a working girl to be more valuable. However, a few young respondents considered the earning capacity of the bride, to be an asset.

18. Majority of the respondents said that they have given dowry or would give gifts, as it is natural for parents to give dowry/gifts to their daughter when she gets married. Other reasons for giving dowry are as follows :

- a. For the daughters happiness, at the time of marriage and soon afterwards, in terms of easier acceptance by her husband and in-laws as a result of the gifts that accompany her. Brides are definitely valued, depending on what she can fetch before, after and at the time of marriage. Sometimes gifts/dowry enable a newly married couple to settle down in early life.

- b. For the daughters sense of security, lest any unforeseen catastrophe befalls her at any time after marriage.
- c. For the prestige and status of the family for most parents love to show off, by displaying the dowry/gifts that they have given to their daughter. The more ostentatious the marriage, the more the prestige and status of the family.
- d. For societal pressures to give, in terms of age old tradition, fear of censor by the society for not giving enough etc.
- e. For the daughters claim to her fathers property. Inspite of equal rights of inheritance to father's property, most parents do not like to divide their property, as they prefer to have their immovable property, at least, to remain within the family, i.e. with the sons. Hence to appease their conscience many parents give, if not equal, at least a part of the share of the total property, to the girl, at the time of her marriage as dowry/gifts.
- f. Last, but not least, some parents give dowry so that they can buy a husband for their daughters—so that she is spared of spinsterhood and its accompanying taunts, ridicule and pity.

19. It is generally the groom's father who initiates the talks concerning the amount of cash/kind that is to be given as dowry. Sometimes a neutral negotiator, e.g. a friend, a neighbour or a marriage-broker, initiates the dowry deal. Only in a few instances, the bride's father broaches on the topic first.

Generally speaking, if the amount demanded as a dowry cannot be fulfilled, the marriage does not take place at all. Majority said that compromises or bargainings are often resorted to, where the final amount to be given is decided on basis of the ability of the bride's father to give and the need of the groom's side to take.

In many instances it has been noticed, that where the groom-

price is too high and cannot be met comfortably by the bride's side, the latter promises, under pressure to see their daughter married, to send the remaining articles at a later date.

Thus the final decision regarding the amount that is to be paid as dowry depends on the grooms side.

Considering it is the groom's side who has the final decision making power, regarding the dowry, they should not create any problems for the bride later, regarding dowry, as it is they who had agreed to the marriage, knowing fully well, what was to constitute the dowry.

20. Majority of the respondents said that dowry was to be given at the time of marriage ; others side that dowry was given before the marriage is held, some said that it is given after the marriage. A few felt that dowry is a life-long process- it is given at the time of marriage, before the marriage and after the marriage !

21. Majority said that what they proposed or felt compelled to give, as gifts/dowry to their daughters, for their marriage, was well with in their means. Under no circumstances would they spend more than what they could afford. However, in order to be able to afford the said dowry, many parents had to work very hard and save for a very long time, foregoing any pleasure of their own.

Those who could not well afford to give what they give, as dowry, would have to borrow at high rates of interest, or sell personal jewellery, in order to meet the deficit. In addition to that, of course, they would have to work very hard in order to be able to save whatever little that they can save.

22. In most of the cases our respondents did not personally have any difficulties with their in-laws for inadequate dowry. Important to note here, is the fact, that majority of our respondents happened to come from neuclear families and not joint families, where some studies show, the dowry problem is more prevalent.

In this context, some respondents felt that parents should

not make false commitments to the grooms side regarding dowry that is to follow at a later date. When-ever, this promise is not kept, for no fault of her own, the bride is taunted, ridiculed, harassed and physically assaulted. In short, she is tortured both mentally and and physically.

However 16% of the total number of respondents, did face difficulties with their husbands/in-laws for not bringing in sufficient dowry,

23. Dowry related problems were rooted in the following causes :

- a. A certain amount had been demanded. The brides side could not afford it. Under duress, they promised to send the remaining amount at a later date, when, after repeated reminders, the promised amount did not come, the bride was harassed.
- b. Whatever had been demanded, had been fulfilled by the bride's parents. But after the marriage, the groom and or his parents started to furnish new demands-which when not met, led to harassments.
- c. No specific demand had been made as dowry. The bride's parents were expected to give whatever they 'should' (note here, not could, but should) give their daughter as gifts. When these gifts came, the groom and or his parents were not satisfied. Hence snide and derogatory remarks were passed about the gifts, slighting both the bride and her parents.

24. What form did the dowry related problems take ?  
They can be broadly classified into the following categories.

- a. mental torture—(as in 23 c).
- b. physical torture—which comprised of not being given enough to eat, being repeatedly sent to parents house to get the remaining dowry, beatings, which were sometimes serious enough to cause physical injuries, poisoning, burning, compelling the bride to commit suicide, strangulating the bride or even throwing her out of high places.



16% of our respondents (i.e. 45 out of 275) admitted to having dowry related problems. Among them 8 had committed suicide or had unnatural deaths and 7 had been murdered.

25. Dowry related problems are prevalent among all sections of the society, irrespective of education, religion, caste and socio-economic status. Among the 11 women studied in depth for Case Study, one Muslim bride was seen to have dowry related problem. It was not only the young brides who faced dowry problems, but also, the older married women faced these problems. Dowry deaths were seen to occur even to women with children and even after 5-8 years of marriage.

26. It was found that inspite of all the ill-treatment, verbal abuse and physical assault, the victimized women and their parents preferred that the victim should live with her husband and in-laws, as that is the rightful place for a married girl. In spite of the fact that the parents were often aware of the ill-treatment and torture that was being meted out to their daughters at their in-laws place, for dowry, they were hesitant to have their daughter come back to their home of origin. This was perhaps due to :

- a. Fear of spoiling the chances of a younger daughter and or son's marriage, due to the social stigma attached to a woman whose marriage did not work.
- b. the financial implications involved in having to maintain a daughter for the rest of her life.

27. Thus, just as much as the in-laws and or the husband are to be blamed/held responsible for the dowry-related problems and their eventual far-reaching consequences, the bride's parents are equally to be blamed. For it is the bride's parents who do not equip most of their daughters educationally to be able to earn a living and then dispose them off to the cheapest available groom. In doing so, they often make false promises, which they subconsciously know they cannot fulfil. Consequently, for the rest of their married lives, the brides are subjected to tremendous humiliation,

sorrow and agony, which only death and death alone can embalm.

28. In none of the cases was the separated or deceased brides dowry, returned to her, in the former case, or to her parents/heirs, in the latter case.

29. Although in one case police action had resulted in arrest and finally life imprisonment for the accused, but generally speaking, police were rather lethargic and unsympathetic towards those who wished to register a case. In this context, the respondents also complained that money could buy even the most high-ranking police-officers, thus the accused could go scot free which embolden them to remarry and obtain more dowry. Thus marriage seems to have become a good money-making business. There is a Bengali proverb which says "Bhagyabaner bou more, Abhagyar Ghora"—which means, "He whose wife dies is a lucky man. He whose horse dies, is an unlucky man".

30. In order to get the opinion of the leaders of macro-politics, regarding dowry, 14 MLA's of various political parties had been interviewed. Generally speaking, they were elderly, upper-caste Hindus, who were highly educated professionals belonging to the middle-income group.

31. Majority of them had opined that dowry was a priority problem, yet the majority of them had never spoken publicly against it, leave alone take concrete steps to eradicate it. A few political leaders, however, had made fiery speeches denouncing the dowry system and personally followed anti-dowry norms and ideals.

32. It was found that not all the leaders were aware of their own party's manifesto. Thus 79% mentioned that dowry does not feature in their election manifesto, while 21% said that dowry is an issue for their party.

33. Majority of the leaders were personally aware of harassments and or torture to brides and their parents for inadequate dowry.

34. 86% of the leaders said that they had future plans for fighting the dowry issue. But majority of these leaders did not have any concrete ideas, visions or plans, as to how to fight the dowry issue.

Thus it can be safely concluded that the leaders mainly gave lip-service to the dowry issue, but were not sincerely motivated to attack or even make any dent on the system of dowry. Hence, if there is such a wide gap between thought and action among the leaders, how can one expect the ordinary masses to bridge this ever widening gap all by themselves ?

35. Majority of the 275 respondents interviewed felt that the giving and taking of dowry was not necessary, as the practice of dowry perpetuates the dowry system, leading to a vicious circle. Hence, dowry should be stopped.

A minority of the respondents interviewed opined that dowry does play a positive role in so far as it gives a woman a sense of security and also helps young couples to settle down in early life. Hence, they felt that dowry should continue.

36. 72% of the 50 respondents interviewed in-depth, were aware of the Dowry Prohibition Act. Only 20% among them knew the salient features of the Act, while only 8% knew the date when the Act had been passed.

37. Majority of these 50 respondents, did not consider this Act to be effective, as the amount of dowry and dowry related marriages were progressively increasing. One respondent ( a semi literate Urban slum dweller ) had been gullible enough to believe that the Government had passed a legislation, making it mandatory to give and receive dowry !

38. Majority of the interviewees agreed that the recent tendency towards increase in dowry marriages was related to modernization, inflation and norms set by higher caste-class groups, which, the masses wanted to imbibe.

39. Majority felt that dowry was taking on the characteristics of a demonic social evil, which was responsible for ruining the lives and families of a large number of people in

India today. Most of the ordinary people did not know how to attack or eradicate this vicious system. They were looking up to the leaders and social reformers to bring about a change or to show the path which would allieviate their sufferings. A few, however, stated that dowry could be stopped via mass education and the media which could be utilized to effect a multi-pronged attack on the evils of the dowry system whereby an atmospheres will be created against the giving and acceptance of dowry. In order to create this atmosphere aid may be taken.

### *Interpretations*

From the above findings it become obvious that, Dowry, whether demanded or given willingly, creates tremendous psychological, social and economic pressures on the brides parents. Whether one is poor or rich, whether the dowry is being given willingly or because of specific demands, it creates a lot of tension, anxiety and worry for any parent with a daughter. Those who do not have anything, worry how to get the things to enable their daughter to get married, those who have a lot want to spend more and more in order to increase their prestige and status in society—thus they too have to cut down on certain things in order to be able to 'out do' the others.

Most parents want to give something, be it a daughter or a son. It is indeed natural. So it should be kept to just that. Thus ostentation has to be stopped. Consumerism is eating up society today. More products are advertised today than ever before and each proclaim to be better than the other. These advertisements hook all people, who want to try out most of the products. What they cannot get by themselves, they expect that the son will be able to fetch through marriage. Thus the poor bride's father becomes the victim, who in order to marry off his daughter would go to any length to buy, say, a transistor radio ( in the case of a rural father) or a T.V. (in the case of an urban parent) for her, while he himself may not have ever had

the opportunity to possess a radio or a T.V. himself.

How can people be made to give up or for—go ostentatious marriages ? For through the show of pomp and grandeur, one is trying to feel strong and powerful. And need for power is a basic instinct. Only a handful who are sufficiently educated and enlightened and have a feeling and sympathy for the ordinary people can change infact some have already adopted anti-dowry norms themselves and have gone in for simple weddings. This is just the beginning. For it is always the more educated and enlightened people who start a reform movement and then slowly but surely it percolates down and reaches everyone.

Society, which till very recently condemned those who could not provide dowry, is now undergoing a swift change. More and more husbands and in-laws are being exposed and ostracized for torturing brides to death. Better sense has prevailed and now the very same society has begun to denounce dowry deaths. Public opinion now seems to be geared against bride battering. Let us hope that this will eventually lead to absolute elimination and total disappearance of dowry from our land.

Anti-dowry demonstrations have been held for the past few years, but participating women are now displaying a new aggressiveness. However, it is not enough to display aggression only after a bride burning incident has taken place for the effect of such aggressive action is only short-lived. What is needed is action that will have a long-range and long-lasting effect.

Yet there is a commendable aspect of such protest action, for it shows that an increasing number of women are boldly coming forward and actively participating in demonstrations and morchas. Gradually, at least some women are realizing that their duty lies not in suffering, sacrifice and endurance, but instead that it is their birth-right to fight discrimination and assert their claim to a dignified existence.

This newly-discovered courage and confidence received a tremendous boost by a number of historic judgements made recently by New Delhi courts. In one instance, in the last

week of May, '84, S.M. Agarwal, Additional District & Sessions Judge of the Delhi High Court sentenced Lakshman Kumar, along with his mother and elder brother to death for burning his eight-month pregnant wife Sudha for not having brought enough dowry. This is the first time that capital punishment has been awarded for a dowry related case.

A Bill incorporating amendments to the Dowry Prohibition Act 1961 was introduced in the last monsoon session of parliament.

One of the amendments was that cruelty to women should be punishable with 3 years imprisonment. A new section was proposed to be introduced in the Indian penal Code to define "cruelty to women"; one of which was that persistent demands for dowry must be seen as acts of cruelty.

It also proposed to make post-mortem compulsory if a woman dies within seven years of marriage.

Amendments to the Evidence Act had also been proposed seeking to put the onus on the husband and in-laws to prove that the woman's death was not due to harassment.

An Amendment to the Criminal Procedure Code was also proposed making lodging of the reports of dowry deaths and harassment of bride, easier and simpler.

The very fact that the proposed amendment to the Evidence Act will mean that in the case of a young married woman taking her own life, harassment by the husband or in-laws will be presumed unless proved otherwise, is in itself a strong deterrent provision. Since dowry deaths occur in the seclusion of the home and family cover-ups are bound to be attempted, this presumption of guilt is wise and sensible. It is an important step in the right direction.

But the most important thing that the bill overlooked was the re-definition of dowry. For to convict a person of an offence, the offence itself must first be clearly defined. Dowry, however is one offence, which the Indian Government has been quite unable to define. Recognizing the lacunae in its definition

in the 1961 Act under which the guilty could be convicted in only one case in a decade—the Government appointed a Joint Consultative Committee, which spent two years working on recommendations for an amending Act.

The Government also had before it the 91st report of the Law Commission presented in 1983, which offered various suggestions on Dowry. And in Aug. 1983, the Supreme Court itself, in a land mark case supplied enough commentary on the issue, for further analysis. Yet none of this has found expression in the amendment. Even the original definition of dowry has not really been changed for the amendment says that "Dowry is any property or valuable security given or agreed to be given, either directly or indirectly, at or before or after the marriage"—but it must be given, "in connection with the marriage". The 1961 Act had an identical definition—except the last phrase which read "in consideration of marriage". The earlier difficulty of proving a distinct link between a dowry demand and the event of marriage remains.

Ambiguous phraseology apart, the framers of the amendment have failed to understand that dowry demands are not made only "in connection with marriage". They continue long after the event is over. Married women are today being burnt for not continuing to bring in dowry—for all the various ceremonies in the first year of marriage, the birth of children, and at every major festival, for years after the marriage.

In an attempt at self—exoneration, the Union Law Minister had stated that married women are looked after by the 1983 Criminal Law Amendment Act, which has amended the Criminal Procedure Code, the Indian Penal Code and the Indian Evidence Act. It states that a person can be convicted of cruelty to a married women, one of the definitions of cruelty being coercion to meet any "unlawful demands for property or valuable security."

If it is conceded that married women are subjected to dowry harassment, it appears strange that the Government should

limit the definition of the term dowry to exclude such demands in the Act specifically created to prohibit it.

Thus it has now become clear that women's organizations will have to gear themselves up to demand many changes in the 1984 Dowry prohibition Amendment Bill. For years women struggled to create a body to amend the 1961 Act. Their next battle was to get the recommendations incorporated. Now a Bill has been put forward and the struggle to amend it, yet again, has already begun.

The most important sections which need change are those dealing with the definition of dowry. It will have to include demands made on prospective brides and married women. The link with the event of marriage must be dropped. Cruelty to women within seven years of marriage for not bringing "money or any-thing estimable in terms of money," should, as suggested by the Law Commission, be seen as a dowry demand. The Supreme Court's definition, that it is the very demand, regardless of its extent or the time frame in which it was made, which must be seen as an offence, should also be incorporated into the Bill.

Once that is done, the amendment will have to be enlarged to incorporate the Joint committee's suggestion for creating a machinery for implementing the Act. The committee had suggested that dowry prohibition officers with police powers should be stationed in every district. Non-official agencies to advise and provide direction in dowry matters must also be set up. Finally all such offences should be tried in family courts, for the harsh, public and impersonal nature of ordinary courts do not permit clear and detailed investigation of such crimes.

Only then will changes in the term of punishment for such offences have any meaning. Until the basic points are dealt with, extending punishment terms, for offences, without definition will amount to no more than gimmickery.

Above all, this amendment must be taken as only the



first step towards changing present legislation, which codifies every existing prejudice and discrimination against women and then operates against them. A just social order will not be created unless women establish their right to exist as free and independent partners in society.

However, in this respect it is not the law courts that will be most effective but the determination or womens organizations to campaign continuously and imaginatively against the custom of dowry and its corollary of vulgarly ostentations marriage celebrations. After all, what is needed is the creation of a cultural environment in which the practice of dowry is itself looked down upon.

Womens organizations like the Womens Coordinating Council, Womens Research Centre, and Professional Training Institute for Women etc. are doing much commendable work in West Bengal, in this field of helping women with dowry problems. Their services vary from counselling, free legal-aid, professional training for women, organizing morchas and processions, to holding community marriages without dowry, campaigning against dowry and ostentations marriages, holding seminars, workshops etc. among young and old alike,

These organizations are mainly city-based. This study shows that the problems of dowry are more prevalent in the rural areas. Hence, such womens organizations should be prepared to take the movement to the villages. Also, women's magazines which claim to be its torch-bearers, might make a start by discontinuing the cattle show called "beauty contests", and stop publishing advertisement that expose women merely as sex objects.

Further, it is not enough to train social workers (who are generally the educated, middle class urbanities and hence do not care to go and live in the villages) in providing legal aid or to set up shelters. If a woman were to walk out, where would she go? What she needs is not just an avenue of escape but a viable option.

For the first time in 31 years of planning, the Sixth Plan document included a chapter devoted to women. This has to be translated into 'the bread and butter fact of employment, for economic independence is the most stable stepping-stone to acceptance of a woman as an individual and this (which is dependent on education) alone can provide her the option of wajking out on cruelty.

Today, women constitute a bare 20.85% of the work force and are pushed into the least remunerative and the most back breaking jobs.

It would also be a rewarding exercise for those who denounce male exploitation to remember that women are often their own worst enemies. Mothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, (and mothers and sisters of the bride, though in a veiled way), outdo the men of the house in cruelty.

Subtler changes than those in statute books and courts will have to come about if women are to look forward to a life of dignity. A couple of changes in the law, a few pre cessions by womens organizations, a few extraordinary judgements do not call for a summer of content. Much more is needed.

The process of total elimination of the dowry system from West Bengal, vis-a-vis, the nation will be as agonizing as it will be slow. But the course has been set, and even though at present the choice appears to be only between suffering silently and suffering while screaming in protest, the latter is still preferable. At least it sows the seed of awareness. In a bleak and barren landscape even this is cause for some hope.

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